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THE

Nonconformist.

THE DISSIDENCE OF DISSENT AND THE PROTESTANTISM OF THE PROTESTANT RELIGION.

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CONTENTS.

Ecclesiastical Affairs:
Mr. Disraeli on the Church Establishment 361
Ecclesiastical Notes..... 361
Nonconformist Conference at Manchester 362
Mr. Disraeli on Ecclesiastical Questions ... 363
Mr. Stansfeld on Education and Disestablishment..... 364
The Late Professor Maurice 364
Religious and Denominational News 366
Correspondence:
Our Farm Labourers ... 367
Fact v. Sentiment..... 367
The Multiplication of Small Churches..... 367
Education in Australia 368
Imperial Parliament 368
Mr. Disraeli and Lord Derby at Manchester ... 370
The Education Act 370
Epitome of News 371
Leading Articles:
Summary..... 372
Lord Salisbury on Education 373
Progress of the Agricultural Movement 373
The London School Board and its Critics 374
Literature:
Christianity and Historical Criticism 375
M. Taine on England... 375
"Middlemarch" 376
English Prose Literature 376
Magazines for April ... 377
Brief Notices 377
Miscellaneous..... 378
Gleanings 378
Births, Marriages, and Deaths 378
Markets 379
Supplement:
The Church Establishment in the Rural Parishes; in Relation to Religion and Nonconformity 385

Ecclesiastical Affairs.

MR. DISRAELI ON THE CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT.

In the speech delivered by Mr. Disraeli at the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, there is abundant evidence that the principal topic intended to characterise the future policy of the Conservative party is the maintenance intact of the special status and privileges of the Church of England, in its union with the State. The right hon. member for Buckinghamshire might very advantageously be imitated by many of his clerical supporters in the tone of moderation with which he urged his views on this question upon his large and excited audience. His defence of that politico-ecclesiastical institution frequently styled the National Church must be regarded as based almost exclusively upon the political, rather than the religious, benefits it is assumed to be fitted to compass. He looks at the connection between Church and State with the eye of a politician. He says that "the wisest sovereigns and statesmen have ever been anxious to connect authority with religion." "In England," he tells us, "we accomplish this great result by an alliance between Church and State, between two original independent powers," and that "it is enough for him if that union was made, and has contributed for centuries to the civilisation of this country." He maintains that "it has secured a national profession of faith with an unlimited enjoyment of private judgment in spiritual matters," and that the existence of various Church parties within the same Establishment is a phenomenon rather to be prized than deprecated. And, finally, he points out the great danger to which the State would be exposed by the immense amount of wealth which the Church, under any conceivable conditions of disestablishment and disendowment, would carry off as her independent dowry.

We do not wish to conceal from ourselves the fact that the problem presented to the mind of a statesman, *qua* statesman, by the proposed severance of the tie connecting political authority with spiritual organisations, is one upon which much difference of opinion may honestly exist. Great and unquestionable truths may be advanced on both sides. Possibly, if we had not possessed actual examples of flourishing States wholly detached from religious institutions, and of great religious institutions in those States doing their work with remarkable success, while at the same time preserving their entire independence without in the least degree encroaching upon the authority or functions of the civil power, the preponderance of *a priori* argument might appear to lie on the side of those who think with Mr. Disraeli that the union of the secular with the sacred in the constitution of a nation is the best guarantee of its progress in civilisation. It is not, however, our purpose just now, to pass under review the right hon. gentleman's observations with the object of refuting him. "Englishmen," he once remarked, and that too in reference to the disestablishment question, "are not governed by logic." Besides, most of our readers are tolerably conversant, we presume, with the facts and arguments which may be arrayed against the position contended for by the right hon. gentleman. We wish to point out that there is a far more important aspect of the controversy than that at which he glanced—an aspect which has regard, not merely, nor primarily, to the civilisation of the people of England, but to their spiritual life and well-being—and that this, after all, will ultimately decide the contest, as, indeed, it has done almost every other contest of a kindred character, in these realms. Upon this phase of the subject Mr. Disraeli was wholly silent.

The question at issue, be it remembered, is mainly a religious question. We do not pretend for a moment, that it has not many and important bearings on the secular interests of the people, on their political freedom, on their intellectual development, on their social unity and harmony, and the civilisation of their manners and customs. We have always held, and have endeavoured to maintain, that the influence of the English Church Establishment upon these interests of our fellow-countrymen has been, on the whole, more repressive than auxiliary. But we have never drawn from considerations of this nature our own chief motive for seeking the severance of the union between Church and State, nor do we believe that they furnish the incentive to the large and active bodies of men who go with us in this matter. They help, no doubt, to quicken desire, to feed zeal, and to sustain effort—but, looked at apart, they would not be able to beget either the enthusiasm, the self-abnegation, or the unflagging persistence, which give assurance of eventual success. The spirit with which the politicians and statesmen of the country must expect to contend, is the same spirit, although somewhat differently exercised, which evoked the energy and heroism, and and achieved the triumphs, of our Puritan forefathers—a spirit of devout allegiance to, and affection for, the Christ of revelation—a spirit which cares much more for His rule over human hearts, than for the worldly position, or ecclesiastical dignity, of any Church assuming to act in His behalf—a spirit that is not content with religious seemings, however comely, but asks for religious realities. This is the fire which will fuse into one victorious force the scattered elements which are now comparatively weak, because accidentally separated from one another. Is the Church Establishment actually grappling with the spiritual evils which show themselves on every hand? Is it proving its aptitude to stamp the image of the infinitely loving and merciful Father upon men's minds? Does what Mr. Disraeli calls the constitution in Church and State foster by its action the upreaving of a godly people? Has it not almost uniformly been more successful in awakening a spirit of sacredotalism in its ministers, than of leavening the mass of its people with the leaven of righteousness? Look at our rural population, over whose best interests, secular and spiritual, it has, or should have had, most sway. What has it done for them? Our Supplement of this day, as well as that which we published at the beginning of the year, exhibits a not unfair specimen of the working of the system in those spheres in which it is most powerful—and we need hardly say it is one which does not satisfy the judgment, the sympathy, nor the conscience of Christian men.

People, in this day of rapid communication of ideas—people, we mean, who are seriously intent upon spiritual realities, whether in the Church or out of it—will soon be discussing with one another, the reason of these disheartening phenomena, and the significance attached to them. Why are they what nobody who has not lost all power of discrimination can deny that they are? Is it an accidental result, or is it the legitimate outcome of a system which aims at spiritual effects by means which are mainly rooted in temporal considerations? The whole economy of the Establishment proceeds on the assumption that faith in Christian verities is inadequate to express itself continuously in Christian virtues—that the letter of religion is more to be trusted than its spirit. Many of the clergy, we know, have risen far above this grovelling and self-contradictory idea. But it is not to be expected of the majority who are encouraged to regard the position of gentlemen as a main inducement to enter the clerical profession, and who are taught to distrust the energy which is evolved by the living spirit of the Christian faith. But these are considerations which are more and more coming to the front. Mr. Gladstone may try to bear up the Establishment by one set of reasons—Mr. Disraeli by another—but the institution affects to seek religious ends by worldly-wise arrangements, and it is by its failure to reach those ends by those ill-chosen methods that it will be at length condemned. This is the vital force which will decide the controversy, and no statesman and no State policy can effectually resist its operation.

ECCLESIASTICAL NOTES.

It is interesting, sometimes, to look through the correspondence columns of our Church contemporaries and see what subjects are uppermost in the minds of their readers. When one does so, it is curious to notice in what different worlds people, and especially good people, do live. Week after week, for a long time past, the *Guardian* has contained columns of correspondence on the Athanasian Creed, which not one subscriber to this journal could ever read. More columns appear this week. Mr. Liddon takes two; nearly two more are devoted to a miscellaneous discussion; the original Greek text of the creed is discussed in two succeeding columns; then there are two more of a miscellaneous kind, and some dozen letters follow upon Shortened Services, Bishops' Registers, Cathedrals, Palm Sunday, Passion Plays, and lots of other things which some person has irreverently described as "ecclesiastical rubbish." But, really, there are persons in this latter half of the nineteenth century to whom all these matters are of vital importance. The Athanasian Creed is great compared to some of the questions that are discussed: the cut of a vestment is a matter of faith; the attitude of a minister involves his orthodoxy

or his heterodoxy, and any question of this kind produces columns of correspondence. We do not laugh or jeer at this; it may seem strange to us, but there it is. There have always been people who have thought more of mint, anise, and cummin, than of the very weightiest matters of the law, and why not of the Gospel? Reading column after column about the Athanasian Creed, we almost begin to believe that Athanasius did write it, and that it is not what it really is,—an ecclesiastical forgery—one of the many forgeries which ecclesiastics have passed off upon the world when it was rather more credulous and ignorant than it is at present. The thing is, historically, a great lie, but being a great one there must be some fuss about it.

Oh! could we only reproduce all that has been written in Church journals and said on Church platforms about this wretched forged creed! In itself, as a literary performance, the thing is about as much entitled to respect as "Sir Roger Tichborne's" claim, but having got into the Prayer-book, there it is, and there is a class of Churchmen who will fight for it accordingly. We read their defence of it with the same sort of feeling that astronomers must have when they come across a man—if there be such a man—who believes in the physical theory of the world as it was explained before certain discoveries—say before Galileo and Newton. There are men—and this is a notable fact—who believe in progression in all physical science (when it does not contradict their favourite theology), but who believe in no progression in religious knowledge—that is to say, beyond a certain point. With one set of people the Pope has discovered everything; with another, Calvin; with another, Luther; with another, John Bunyan; and with another, John Wesley. Teachers of to-day are not so recognised, although in any denomination there might be found the equal, and, indeed the superior, in religious knowledge, of the Pope, of Calvin, of Luther, of Bunyan, and of Wesley. But in the Church there is a stopping-point. Nobody can be wiser than the Articles, and nobody can be better than the spirit exhibited in the canons. What is laid down in the Prayer-book is laid down there, and that is sufficient. As we have said, the Athanasian Creed happens to be there, and so your modern Churchmen, when the creed is attacked, defend it as though it were inspired. Well! it has had the imprimatur of Laud, of Hoadley, of Warburton—how much did the last two believe in it?—and of Wilberforce, and of Tait, and Tait informs us, after using it for a generation, that nobody whatsoever believes in it. Here, however, you have one of the small difficulties of the Establishment. The archbishop may say this, but no sooner does he say it, than other clergymen start up and declare that they believe every word of it—naturally enough, after having signed a solemn declaration in that sense. Within the last week, therefore, we have had meetings in favour of the creed. Dr. Pusey has come forward to express his belief, "with ten thousands of others," that the creed is an "invaluable guide," &c., while the Bishop of Lincoln, in "sorrow and distress," protests against the disuse of it as a document that has done—one don't know what. This is the present state of affairs, and it shows how valuable the Act of Uniformity, how valuable Subscription, and how valuable the contents of the Prayer-book must be. You may say that nobody believes in anything, or you may say that everybody believes in everything, and you may still be a devoted son of the Establishment.

It would seem that the disestablishment controversy is producing an unexpected and an untoward effect in certain directions. At a meeting of the Ripon Church-Building Society held last week, Mr. Francis Darwin told the audience that there was at present, amongst the laity, a degree of uncertainty as to the future which operated against giving. He said:—"They could not conceal from themselves the fact that there was a large party opposed to the connection between Church and State, and a great number of laymen—some of his own personal friends—had expressed to him their dislike to contribute large sums of money to the Church under present circumstances." While we are glad to know that the idea of early disestablishment has thus taken such deep root in the minds of Churchmen, we should like to say a word to reassure Mr. Darwin, and other members of the Ripon Diocesan Church-Building Society, and, indeed, of all church-building societies. There is not a Dissenter living who would wish to touch a stone of any edifice that may be raised by the contributions of Mr. Darwin or any of his friends. After saying this, we hope to hear that the funds of the Ripon Society have improved.

Men often get upon the platform to say one thing and end by saying another. This, we should judge, must have been the case with the Bishop of Manchester in addressing a meeting at Blackburn on Monday evening on the education question. The bishop, after defying, in hot language, anybody to prove that the Church of England had ever been sectarian, went on to say,—

> The 237 reports made by Mr. Woodhouse, the diocesan inspector of religious education, showed that it was considered enough in many schools for the children to know the main facts of two or three books in the Bible, if they had an acquaintance with the outlines of the life of our blessed Lord. They appeared to know but little of the catechism; they could repeat a few hymns and a few collects, and that was all. That seemed to be more than was realised in a great number of schools. The fact was, and he had always felt it was so, that their religious teaching, instead of covering the ground it should cover, was lamentably low and lamentably deficient in breadth of area.

Does the bishop really intend this as an argument in favour of religious education in public schools, which he rose to defend, but seems to have forgotten all about when he communicated this singular bit of information?

We have all watched, with interest and sympathy, the process of the reconstitution of the Irish Episcopalian Free Church. We have seen how admirably it has met all its difficulties, and how quietly and confidently it is settling itself down. But the greatest revelation we have had has come in the way of the power of Voluntaryism in the Church. Money has poured into it by scores of thousands. Last week a meeting was held at Leeds in support of its Sustentation Fund, when we find one of the representatives of the Irish Church saying,—

> He thought it was rather in their favour at the outset that, notwithstanding disestablishment and disendowment, no angry invective or cry of mendicity had been heard from Churchmen beyond the Channel. (Hear, hear.) In the first place, they had to work out the very difficult problem of combining the freedom of their new-born liberty with all the safer antecedents of their ancient history. They had to bring the laity face to face with the clergy in their councils and in their synods. They met and discussed all matters together, whilst they voted separately if they chose. The laity had nobly come forward to help the Church, and none more willingly than the poor. The poor farmers and peasantry throughout the country had been rating themselves for the support of the Church at 6d. and 8d. in the pound on the valuation of their little holdings. In his own parish, which, was a poor one, a sum of 1,300*l.* was raised in fifteen months towards the Sustentation Fund, and 90*l.* of that amount was in penny per week subscriptions. (Hear, hear.)

And this is the Church that was going to die on being disestablished and disendowed!

NONCONFORMIST CONFERENCE AT IPSWICH.

An influential Nonconformist Conference was held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Ipswich, on Wednesday. The weather was anything but inviting, nevertheless the chamber was full of gentlemen from all parts of the county, including veterans in the ranks. The tone of the conference (says the *Suffolk Chronicle*, to which we are indebted for our report) was good. A general unanimity prevailed as to the defects in the Elementary Education Act, and the only question which created an approach to difference of opinion was as to the propriety of passing a resolution as to the future action of Nonconformists at the polling-booth, the committee having previously thought the resolution would be best left to the public meeting in the evening. A resolution was, however, ultimately carried without opposition, and that resolution may be described as the practical result of the conference. Mr. JOHN NEVE, of Tuddenham, presided.

The CHAIRMAN, in a brief speech, expressed his hearty concurrence in the objects of the conference.

The Rev. J. G. ROGERS, B.A., of Clapham, then spoke on "The Politics of Nonconformity." In respect to the charge of being "Political Dissenters," he said that it was the existence of a State Church which marked out their distinctive and special line of politics as Nonconformists. Their politics as Christians should be altogether irrespective and apart from their sectarian relations. They were occupying distinctive ground as Nonconformists simply because the condition of ecclesiastical affairs placed them in that position in which it was imperative on them to assert the dissidence of their dissent. They did not rejoice in that position—it was forced upon them, and they were compelled to maintain it. Their next principle in relation to their politics as Nonconformists was that their politics should be guided by principle rather than by any sectarian relation, or personal or party feeling. One reason why politics had come into such discredit was, because the game of politics was played with such discreditable artifices, instead of being looked upon as an important function of religious life. Christian men could have nothing to do with bottling up voters, bribing or intimidating them into an avowal of principles which they did not hold. He did not wonder that many Christian men declined to have anything to do with selecting candidates and carrying them, for, said they, it was a mere battle between rooks and crows. Nonconformists, he said, must necessarily contend for Liberal principles, and this arose out of their principles as Nonconformists. He had heard of such things as Tory Dissenters, but he did not understand them; into their secrets his soul had no desire to enter. (Laughter and applause.) Dissenters breathed the very atmosphere of freedom. They lived to assert the right of individual conviction and to protest against exclusive class privilege. They claimed no particular merit for themselves or any gratitude from the Liberal party because they had been found contending heartily on the Liberal side: their co-operation arose out of the principles they held. He did not think the Liberals would have carried their political measures without their help, or that they would have acquired the rights they enjoy without their (the Liberals') sympathy and co-operation. Dissenters had never sought for themselves what they were not prepared to concede to others. He did not shrink from saying that the triumphs of the Liberal party had been mainly due to the hearty co-operation of Nonconformists—(Hear, hear)—and there was hardly a borough with which he was acquainted in which the principal men in the Liberal party were not Nonconformists; there was hardly a constituency in which Liberalism was triumphant but the men who guided its councils were Nonconformists. The strength of Dissent was not to be measured by the number of Nonconformists in the House of Commons; but the time seemed to have come when it was for them to consider whether the old relation between them and the Liberal party should subsist or not. Were they to remain part of the party, or were they to take separate action? He denied that they were making extravagant demands upon the Liberal party. In what way had they endeavoured to press their extreme views upon the party? Their view was that the same principle which carried disestablishment in Ireland ought to carry disestablishment in England—(applause)—but had they endeavoured to press that upon Mr. Gladstone and his Ministry? They had frankly confessed that the time had not come for a Liberal Ministry to make disestablishment of the English Church a part of its programme; but they had said, and would say again, with greater emphasis, that no Liberal Government should ever consent to retreat from the principle of religious equality to which it had already committed itself. (Applause.) Dissenters did not insist upon advancing to an extreme point, but they had a right to expect that the Government should not lend themselves to the perpetration of fresh injustice. Their complaint was that the Government had been going back. Government having been carried to power by the enthusiastic support of Nonconformists, the latter objected that the Government should be using all their weight to the building up of the clerical influence which was employed to defeat them at the last election, and which influence, whenever an election came again, would take little account of the services rendered to it by Government, and would again prove itself antagonistic to Liberalism. Nonconformists said the Education Act was retrogressive; it did the very thing which it ought not to have done, and they had no choice but to raise their protest and take positive action; and there was this remarkable feature in this case—that there was no advanced and independent Liberal out of the Government, and even some in it, who did not confess that they were in the right and Government in the wrong. Asking the question, what were Nonconformists to do? he said candidates must be prepared to repeal the 25th clause of the Education Act, and if Nonconformists were to do anything they must know their own mind, say what they mean, and do what they say. They must organise themselves and stand upon the broad basis of right. They believed the future of England was bound socially, morally, and religiously, with the assertion of absolute religious equality; and on that ground they took their stand, and would maintain their position till they carried their standard to victory. (Loud applause.)

Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN, of Birmingham, then read an elaborate paper on the education question, dealing with recent legislation only so far as it infringed the rights and affected the principles of Nonconformists, at the same time not forgetting the higher claims of the national welfare. They believed that the present action was imperatively called for in the interests of the whole nation. Referring to the three stages by which the Government had dealt with education—primary, middle-class, and University—he showed in detail the results of the Education Act so far as they had been ascertained and as they concern Dissenters. After giving statistics already familiar to our readers, he said the Church schools were greatly increased by the recent building grants, and will now occupy the whole ground in thousands of districts and provide sufficient accommodation. No school boards can be established under the Act in these parishes, and Dissenters must accept education in these schools for their children under such protection as the conscience clause may be supposed to afford, or go without it altogether. But there remains a large number of districts where accommodation is still insufficient; and in these school boards have been or will be created, which under the cumulative vote, affording as it does the greatest possible advantage to the best organised sect, will secure to Churchmen a complete control of the so-called national schools. The increased activity of

educational work has required the appointment of new inspectors, and thirteen have been already provided. By a singular coincidence the first twelve were all members of the dominant sect. It was acknowledged that the national and denominational system had failed, and he asked what influence could have been at work to induce the proposal of a scheme by which a system thus universally condemned is not only made permanent and independent of private support, but is unnecessarily extended and enlarged. The operation of denominational schools, now increased at the expense of the nation, is distinctly to prevent the election of school boards in hundreds of districts, and thereby to render impossible the compulsory attendance of children; a matter which is by Mr. Forster himself considered of such primary importance that he does not hesitate to violate the consciences of thousands of ratepayers, rather than risk the failure of its application in the few exceptional cases in which parents might possibly be induced to object to send their children to other than strictly denominational schools. In other words, the Government favours compulsion at the expense of the whole body of Nonconformists, where at most only a few children are concerned, and at the same time discourages compulsion, again at the expense of the Nonconformists, in the case of many hundred districts where it might be applied to thousands of children. Alluding to the policy of the Government as one that pointed to an anxious desire to purchase at any price the support and goodwill of the State clergy, Mr. Chamberlain referred to the point made by Mr. Forster that compulsion will be impossible if parents are refused the choice of a school; he said if the priests and parsons stood on one side they should not hear much of the parents' scruples. (Loud cries of "Hear, hear.") What are the facts? Let us admit the full case of our opponents—that the child stands in need of secular and religious instruction, and that the parent earnestly desires that he should obtain both. Even then, how do we infringe his rights by granting one of his desires? The child from the gutter, taught to read and write, to be orderly, cleanly, truthful, and industrious, will be so far the better; and if he does not learn the catechism, or the lesson on the mass, he will be no worse in this respect than before he was compelled to attend the school. (Applause.) But we Nonconformists are ready to undertake that if the parents desire it, we will secure for their children, at our own cost, a religious instruction that shall complete his secular education. Is it to be admitted, that the richest of all the sects, the one with the most perfect organisation and the most extensive machinery, is alone unable to provide for the spiritual welfare of its flocks, at the same time that it holds its vast endowments on the plea that to it is confided the care of the souls of the whole nation? The claim is only another proof of the truth of Mr. Bright's remark, that "the Church is thankful for everything it can get, and it never loses anything for want of asking for it." (Laughter and applause.) The hollowness of the cry which has been raised is well known by Mr. Forster's admission, that where there is no choice of schools the alleged right of conscience must be disregarded. In concluding his review of the working of the Elementary Education Act, he said that the consistent tendency of all its objectionable provisions renders it difficult to escape the conclusion that these were designedly framed to promote the supremacy of a sect, and this conclusion is confirmed by the denominational administration of a denominational measure. If they sought for the evidence of design in the bias of recent educational legislation, they would find it unmistakably in the working of the Commission on Endowed Schools. He proceeded to refer to the efforts made to secure for the government of these schools a strong majority of Churchmen, and to show that between the Endowed School Commissioners and the Education Department the whole primary and middle-class education of this country will become the practical monopoly, of a sect while the culture and instruction of the young of the present and future generations will be handed over to the control of a priesthood and to the care of an ecclesiastical organisation. It is now left to the Nonconformist bodies of this country to say how far they will accept such a consummation and such a sacrifice of their cherished hopes and principles. (Cheers.).

Short speeches were made by several gentlemen upon topics suggested by the papers. The Rev. E. JONES asked for a decision as to what should be done at the next election, and said he should move that Mr. Chamberlain's paper be printed and circulated throughout the country. The Rev. J. W. SMITH seconded this proposition; and the Rev. W. WHALE strongly insisted upon supporting no candidate who did not recognise absolute religious equality; and he accused the Government of withholding religious equality with one hand, and of pandering to a system of exclusive sectarian privilege with the other. The Irish education question would raise a serious issue, for the present policy involved a denominational system in Ireland. Mr. BEDWELL, Halesworth, asked for advice as to whether Nonconformists who formed part of Liberal committees should withdraw unless the committee, as a whole, came up to the mark; and Mr. S. ALEXANDER suggested that Dissenters had been caught napping, and called forth many exclamations of "No, no!" as he proceeded to advocate religious instruction in schools, on the ground that as the churches had failed to do it the schools should do it, and to express his opinion that there was some good in Clause 25. Mr. F. J. BUGG retorted upon Mr. Alexander's remark that the Churches had failed, by asking, If a religious Church had failed, would an irreligious State succeed? The question excited some applause. Mr. ROBERT PEARCE asked for a clear and definite programme—compulsion as to education, religious equality, and no denominational interference with rate-aided schools. Mr. ADAMS, Lowestoft, asked for something practical as the result of that conference, as he came from a town where there were considerable Nonconforming laxity and a powerful Church influence. He suggested further organisation. — Mr. ALFRED PIPER, as to the county, said the solution of the difficulty appeared to rest here—what will Sir Shafto Adair do? If he would go in for the repeal of the 25th clause then the Nonconformists' course was clear. He should be exceedingly sorry to see committees composed of Episcopalians and Nonconformists broken up. They wanted to secure their ends, but not at the expense of endless mischief.—The Rev. E. JONES said he wished those two great principles, that it was no part of the duty of the Church of Christ to give secular instruction to the nation, and that it was no duty of the Government to impart religious education, were more thoroughly understood. Mr. Jones, apparently alluding to Mr. Alexander's remarks, expressed his grief that an old Nonconformist body like the Society of Friends were forsaking their standard; and this brought up Mr. GRIPPER, a member of that society, who denied that it was forsaking its old grounds. He admitted, however, that on this question the society had made a mistake, and expressed his own opinion in favour of secular instruction.—The Rev. G. SNASHALL proposed the following resolution:—

That this conference entirely approves of the declaration of the Manchester Conference, that no candidate should receive the support of Nonconformists at the next election who will not pledge himself to vote for the amendment of the Elementary Education Act in the sense of the resolutions passed by the Manchester Conference.

He emphatically declared that he would vote for no man who was not prepared to vote for the repeal of the 25th Clause of the Education Act.—The Rev. J. BROWNE, Wrentham, seconded the resolution, endorsing Mr. Snashall's declaration. He did not think Sir Shafto Adair was impracticable, especially if the Nonconformists were firm; and, for his own part, he (Mr. Browne) intended to be firm, whatever might happen.—Mr. ROGERS remarked upon the versatility of members of Parliament; and he counselled a strict unwavering electoral policy as to the future. One great result would be that they would get a better class of candidates. He severely criticised Mr. Forster's conduct, speaking of him as an "unscrupulous adversary."—Mr. STANNARD spoke in favour of the cumulative vote; and Mr. R. L. EVERETT, Rushmere, referring to the resolution, said there was no constituency in the country in which the issue would be more painful to Dissenting Liberals than in East Suffolk. He declined to bind himself; at the same time it was wise that a definite expression of opinion by tongue should be given, so that Sir Shafto Adair might consider what he would do in prospect of an election.—Mr. E. GRIMWADE went with Mr. Everett, he would not bind himself, but would rather trust in Sir Shafto as a man of honour and open to conviction.—Mr. PIPER spoke much in the same strain, believing in Sir Shafto.—The Rev. E. JONES took the uncompromising line.—Mr. CHAMBERLAIN followed on a similar track. One thing which had led the Government into their fatal mistake had been the want of unanimity amongst Nonconformists; and he urged them not to falter in carrying out their principles.—The Rev. T. M. MORRIS said they must stand firm at the next election and not allow themselves to be played with as they had been.—The resolution, which as given above is in an amended form and not quite so strong as the original, was then carried, many voting for it, but not all.—On the motion of Mr. LANKESTER WEBB, Combs, a vote of thanks was given to the Mayor for the use of the chamber, and the conference closed.

After the conference a tea-meeting was held in the Temperance Hall, at which the Rev. E. Jones presided.—Mr. HENRY ANDREWS delivered a short commentary upon the proceedings of the afternoon, and Mr. ADAMS spoke on the necessity of immediate action being taken.—Mr. J. F. ALEXANDER proposed, and Mr. ADAMS seconded:—

That the committee who had called the conference together should form a committee for a Nonconformists' association, and communicate with the different congregations in the county to form branches, and to carry out the objects proposed.

The Rev. T. M. MORRIS and the Rev. G. SNASHALL also spoke.

In the evening a public meeting was held in the Public Hall, and was fairly attended. The chair was taken by Mr. E. GRIMWADE, who was supported by the deputation, Mr. JAS. CHAMBERLAIN and Rev. J. G. ROGERS, and many of the gentlemen who were present at the conference.

After a short speech from the chairman, Mr. R. L. EVERETT moved the following resolution:—

That this meeting regards with profound dissatisfaction the educational policy of the Government as shown—1st, in the provisions and working of the English Education Act—2nd, by some of the proposed provisions of the Scotch Education Bill—3rd, by Mr. Forster's amendment to Mr. Dixon's notice of motion of March 5th—and by sundry utterances of the Government, which afford intimation as to their probable education policy for Ireland.

It might be asked why the Nonconformists objected to the way in which the Government had acted, and his answer was that the Government, in passing a law by which rates and taxes paid by people of all shades of religious opinion were used in teaching particular religious dogmas, violated the common principles of justice and the fundamental principles of the Bible, which taught them to do unto others as they would be done by. He pointed out that it was a great absurdity that the Government should pay one person to teach a doctrine and another to overturn his arguments.

The Rev. G. SNASHALL, in seconding the resolution, said they were charged with trying to bring about a godless system of education, and had been called infidels and all kind of names. The Nonconformists, however, believed heart and soul that an education without religion was radically deficient. He thought the 400,000 godly men and women who worked Sunday after Sunday in the Sunday-schools of Nonconformists were a sufficient contradiction of that. The Dissenters wished for religious education, and in order to obtain that they went in for secular education in the day-schools, leaving religious education for the Churches.

Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN, in supporting the resolution, described the position of Nonconformists in respect to the 25th clause of the Education Act, as that of the stork who was invited to dinner by the fox, by whom a quantity of soup was provided in a flat dish. He quoted from figures, referring to the expenditure of the Manchester School Board under this clause, which showed that the Church of England and Roman Catholic schools received 635*l.*, while the undenominational schools received 70*l.*, and the Wesleyans 15*l.* 13*s.* 8*d.* But whether the Nonconformists were in a position to take their share of the spoils or not, it was equally objectionable, being a carrying out of the principle of concurrent endowment. He referred to the fact that the Evangelicals and the Roman Catholics were united in their support of this clause, and remarked that on many school boards Scripture was being carried out, for the wolf and the lamb were lying down together, and the cow and the bear feeding together. (Loud laughter and applause.) There was no such a thing as giving a fair trial to an unfair bill. It had been said that Nonconformists would let children perish for want of education rather than give up or postpone their agitation. He said that was a libel. (Applause.) They had always been willing to make sacrifices when any good reason could be shown for it, but it was in the interests of national education that they now agitated this question.

The Rev. J. BROWNE, B.A., who was enthusiastically received, moved the second resolution—

That this meeting cordially approves of Mr. Miall's proposed motion in the House of Commons, and also desires to express its hope that Mr. Fawcett's Dublin University Bill and Mr. Osborne Morgan's Burials Bill, which have already passed their second reading, may become law during the present session, seeing that such measures have for their ultimate object the securing of perfect religious freedom and equality.

The speaker referred at some length to the grievance which the Burials Bill was designed to remove.

The Rev. T. M. MORRIS seconded the resolution, remarking that he was glad to see in a prominent position in the resolution the name of one who had been foremost in the ranks of those who supported civil and religious liberty—Mr. Miall. (Applause.) They were taunted with being political Dissenters. He was not ashamed to bear that name, and he would say that as soon as the Episcopal Church was liberated from the bonds which now held her, and ceased to be a political Church, they would cease to be political Dissenters from it.

The Rev. J. G. ROGERS, in supporting the resolution said that a local Tory journal seemed to like Mr. Miall's motion much better than the Burials Bill. So did he. (Loud laughter and applause.) The Nonconformists were quite willing to accept battle on the broad issue of whether there should be a State Church or not, and therefore they said, "God speed to Mr. Miall's motion." That motion was merely for an inquiry into the property of the Church of England, and if they could prove that all property possessed by the Churchmen was voluntarily left to them, and that the Anglican Church was the same Church as that to which these benefactions were left, then let them court this inquiry, and if this question of property were settled, he believed everything else would be settled, for the Churchmen themselves were tired enough of the fetters which formed the other part of the connection between Church and State. He considered that Mr. Disraeli's going to Manchester would rather have the effect of uniting the divided forces of the Liberal party than otherwise, and the best policy for the Tories was silence. The only programme upon which Mr. Gladstone could go to the country now was opposition to the Tories, but that would not avail much. The Dissenters, though they might not be able to carry their own measures, could at least show to the Liberal leaders that they should not abuse the confidence of the Liberal party. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. E. GODDARD moved, and Mr. A. PIPER seconded, a vote of thanks to the chairman, and this closed the meeting.

MR. DISRAELI ON ECCLESIASTICAL QUESTIONS.

In his great speech at the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, on Wednesday evening last, Mr. Disraeli thus referred to the educational and State-Church questions:—

Now, with regard to the Nonconformist body, there is no man in England more ready to pay the respect to them which I fairly believe they deserve. (Cheers.) They have done much for public liberty; they have shown on many occasions and on many subjects a

masculine sense that has exercised a most salutary effect, in my judgment, upon public opinion. (Cheers.) They have appealed to the historical records with confidence and just pride. (Cheers.) So far as I am concerned, if I could have found that in the settlement of the education question by the last bill any injustice was done to the Nonconformists, I would have voted with them—(cheers)—and I am sure my noble friend would have done the same; but I declare, though I puzzled my mind to find out what their cause was for impugning the arrangements then entered into, I am utterly at a loss at this moment to ascertain any point on their part which can, with any show of reason, be enforced. There is, under the Education Bill, no favour shown to Churchmen which is not equally shown to Nonconformist churches. Equally the Churchman and the Nonconformist can establish a school; equally, according to the population of the districts in which they are founded; equally, if it is necessary, the minority may find the protection of the conscience clause. I cannot understand, so far as I have observed, that they really can deny the view which I have placed before you; but no one can for a moment hesitate to see that their opposition to the Education Bill, and the influence of the clergy under the Education Bill, is real and determined. The question, then, for us is to ascertain what should be the course that we should follow under such circumstances. I must express my deep regret and astonishment that any portion, or a most influential portion, of the Nonconformists of England—I will not say out of envy, for I have no desire to use a phrase in a hostile manner, but out of pique to the influence of Churchmen in the matter of popular education—that the Nonconformists should have sanctioned to so considerable a degree the question of secular education. I hope upon this subject, when the opportunity occurs, that the people of England will speak in a manner that cannot be misunderstood. (Cheers.) I hold that a national system of education which is not founded in a recognition of religion would lead to national disaster, and I am persuaded that if that recognition takes place human nature will not be satisfied to stop at that point; it will arrive at conclusions, and it will draw inferences, which it may be fashionable to call formularies and dogmas of Acts of Parliament; but the conscience and intelligence of men are more powerful even than Acts of Parliament—(cheers)—and I am satisfied that a system of national education which either relinquishes religion or makes it subordinate will be the greatest failure that ever occurred—(cheers)—but more fatal to the State than the Church. (Cheers.) I am not myself insensible to the dangers and the perplexities which the Church of England is destined to encounter, and which it must meet; but I have always had, and never more than at this moment, confidence in its future. (Cheers.) I have it now, because, from what I observe in the opinions of the laity generally, and very much in those of the clergy, I see an approximation to a comprehensive spirit in the Church which alone can make it national. (Cheers.) I do not mean that the Churchmen should be what is called "broad," that is an ambitious epithet which perhaps involves a sinister meaning—(cheers)—but I believe that the Church may be animated by a comprehensive spirit quite consistent with the maintenance of formularies and the respect for dogmas without which I believe there can be no practical religion. I do not come here to make a party speech, but at the same time I will not restrict myself from making those observations upon public affairs which become a public man; and I must say it is with the greatest regret and wonder (more regret even than wonder) that on the part of the chief subject of this realm—I mean the Prime Minister of England, who is always writing letters, and making speeches, and chiefly upon these subjects—there is ever an uncertain sound. (Cheers.) If a member of Parliament announces himself to be a Republican, the Prime Minister of England recognises him as a fellow-labourer. (Laughter.) If a noisy multitude demands the abolition, or only the reform, of the House of Lords, the Prime Minister of England says, "That is a difficult business," and I think he adds, that he must think once or twice, or even thrice about it. (Laughter and cheers.) If a gentleman who represents a borough not far distant from here — Mr. Miall— (groans) —brings forward a motion in the House of Commons for the disestablishment of the Church—(cries of "Never")—the Prime Minister tells Mr. Miall that it must be obvious to him that the temper of the House of Commons is not at present in favour of it, that if he wants to succeed he must act upon opinion out of doors—(laughter)—whereupon Mr. Miall, like a sensible man, calls a public meeting, and tells the public meeting exactly what the Prime Minister told him, and says, "In consequence of these instructions I have called this meeting, in order that we may petition Parliament for the disestablishment of the English Church."

On Thursday Mr. Disraeli received a number of deputations. One of them was from the National Association for Freedom of Worship (the society which proposes to do away with pews in parish churches throughout the country). An address setting forth the objects sought was read by Mr. Herford, chairman of the council. It expressed a hearty welcome to Mr. Disraeli, and a hope that, as the political franchise had been extended, the religious franchise would also be conferred upon a large and important class of the community. No revolution was sought, but only the peaceable restoration of ancient rights. Mr. Disraeli, in replying, said:—

I have always looked upon the future of the Church of England in our great towns as one not of that disheartening character which some of the best friends of the Church believed it possessed. It appears to me that it has a great opportunity in appealing to large bodies of men who are crowding especially our manufacturing towns, and that there is there a field for the advancement of Church principles which it is difficult to find in any other part of the country. But there is no doubt that it is of the utmost importance that when the Church appeals to the masses, the masses should find that the Church is ready to receive them. I shall watch the movement of your society with great interest. I have long been persuaded of the excellence of the principles upon which it is founded, and if ever I have an opportunity of forwarding the policy which you support you may rely upon my doing it. On this, as on every occasion, I would impress upon all societies the object of which is to maintain and advance the interests and influence of the Church of England, to mix those objects as little as possible with mere party politics. I have never sanctioned the use of that influence for mere party ends. I am persuaded myself that the principles upon which the Church of England is founded are principles which naturally will find a sympathetic response among those who I believe are the great body of the nation, and are favourable to the institutions of the country. I look forward to the Church as I look to Churchmen, as the maintainers and upholders of the institutions of the land; but I wish as much as possible to divest that natural connection of mere party feeling, and I am prepared upon all occasions to act with Churchmen heartily and cordially for the great ends which they propose without any reference to the immediate necessities of the political connection of which I am proud to be a member. (Cheers.)

Next came the Northern Church Defence Association. In replying to these gentlemen Mr. Disraeli said:—

What I would say generally is that the first duty of the Church Defence Associations is to maintain as far as they can the present legal and constitutional position of the Church of England. (Cheers.) That has, no doubt, by recent acts of legislation been in some degree injured and impaired, but not to such an extent as that the Church does not still occupy in this country a very commanding position, and one which, with good judgment and discretion, may yet exercise a great influence over the nation. (Hear, hear.) I have said there are two great things still left in this country, and that the Church is one. (Cheers.) Convinced if you be, as I am, of that truth, Englishmen will learn to value and prize it; and the very circumstance that its privileges are in danger—those privileges being the privileges of Englishmen—will only make them exert themselves with greater energy and animate them with greater efforts practically to support it. (Hear, hear.) I should say at this moment there is an opportunity of exercising a considerable influence on the opinion of Parliament, and which, if used successfully, may have a most beneficial effect on the future of the Church. The Burials Bill is now before Parliament. (Hear, hear.) If the country will rally to the cry and send petitions to Parliament against that measure, I by no means despair of our being able to defeat it. (Cheers.) But those who uphold the privileges of the Church of England—which I again repeat are the privileges of the people of England—if they do not show a becoming sense of the importance of the occasion, may not find their efforts effectual; therefore, as you ask me for advice, I would recommend each of you in the various districts in which you live to send up your petitions to the House of Commons. (Hear, hear.) You are so well represented in this county that you have plenty of admirable members to present them. If you had not so many I should offer to present them myself. (Cheers.) We shall soon be going into committee on the Burials Bill, but the great fight will be on the third reading, and there is sufficient time before that for you to bestir yourselves in the matter I have indicated. That is the one practical counsel I have to give you, and if we succeed in defeating that measure, I think the tide will have turned, and we shall have arrested the progress of these invasions, which have been successful in too many instances as much from the negligence of the Church as from the activity of its assailants. (Cheers.)

A MEMBER of the DEPUTATION suggested that in future censuses the religious opinions of the people should be embodied, but the declaration of faith should be made or withheld as the person whose duty it was to fill in the census-paper saw fit.

Mr. DISRAELI: That is a good idea, and I would remind Churchmen that they have ten years to exert themselves. We ought to do something by that time. (Laughter.)

The deputation then withdrew, after thanking Mr. Disraeli for his reception.

MR. STANSFELD ON EDUCATION AND DISESTABLISHMENT.

In the course of his speech to his constituents at Halifax on Wednesday, Mr. Stansfeld, President of the Local Government Board, said he had to refer to two matters in which at present, and in the future, no doubt, great interest would be felt: he referred to the educational policy of the Government, and to the disestablishment of the Established Church. He had not changed his opinions with regard to either of those questions, and he should vindicate the policy of Her Majesty's Government upon these subjects. In education he was a secularist—(cheers)—but this was not the principle held by the country at large. He desired education above all, and it was because of this that he submitted to a compromise—for that the Education Act was a compromise no one could doubt. That Act required amendment, and he was at liberty to say to them that they had a very good prospect of that amendment being carried into effect. (Loud cheers.) Upon the Established Church he had invariably said to them that the disestablishment of the English Church was a question of time only. No man, at least no sane man, would suggest to set up an Established Church in this country if no such institution already existed. He could not tell them how long it would take to bring about the overthrow of the Church. No doubt a great deal depended on what went on inside the Church; and they all knew the state it was in just now. In his opinion, when the day did arrive and the Established Church was abolished, the result would be to reinvigorate the religious life of the people of this country. With regard to the policy of the Government upon these two questions, all he had to say was that the policy was progressive. They were aware of the discussion which had recently taken place on the motion of the hon. member for Birmingham, and they were also aware of the statement then made by Mr. Forster. The Government had done as much as they could do, and as much as rational men could expect them to do, for they had to please all sections of the party as far as they possibly could, but it was to be hoped that in another session of Parliament the amendment in the Act which most of them desired to see would be carried out. As to the disestablishment of the Church the position of the Government was clear and well defined. Mr. Miall's motion was couched in very general terms, and if the Government had not opposed it, they would practically have stood committed to take some approximate action. For this reason they met it with a direct negative, because it was a subject which they could not venture to approach.

THE LATE PROFESSOR MAURICE.

On Friday afternoon, beneath a bright blue sky and in the presence of a large assemblage of friends, public admirers, and strangers who revered his name for the sake of his writings, the mortal remains of John Frederick Denison Maurice were consigned to their last resting place in the Highgate Cemetery. The funeral *cortége*, which consisted of a hearse drawn by four horses and seven mourning-coaches, arrived at the cemetery gates at half-past one o'clock. These were followed by a large number of the members, past and present, of the Working Men's College, their wives, and other relatives, and by several private carriages, including that of the Dowager Lady Westmoreland. The coffin was of the simplest kind, covered with plain black cloth, and the coffin plate recorded his name and the dates of his birth and death. The funeral service was read by Mr. Maurice's old and attached friend, the Rev. John Llewellyn Davies, rector of Christ Church, Marylebone. At the conclusion of that part of the service which was read in the chapel the body was carried to the grave, which is situated at the top of the cemetery, in the northern corner, close to the parish church of Highgate. The remains of Mr. Maurice rests in his family tomb, side by side with the widow of Archdeacon Hare. At the close of the service, "Abide with me" and another hymn were sung by an unprofessional choir, composed chiefly of members and friends of the London Working Men's College. Amongst the mourners in the funeral carriages were Mr. Frederick Maurice and Mr Edward Maurice, chief mourners; Professor Plumptre, the Rev. J. Ll. Davies, Mr. J. A. Hardcastle, M.P., Mr. Edmond Sterling, Mr. Chambers, the Rev. Charles Kingsley, Dr. Radcliffe, Mr. Thomas Hughes, M.P., Mr. Ludlow, Dr. Montagu Butler, of Harrow, the Rev. J. S. Brewer, the Rev. Fenton Hort, Mr. Rawlins, Mr. Macmillan, &c. Among the crowd who stood beside the grove were the Dean of Westminster and Lady Augusta Stanley, Sir Thomas Acland, M.P., Mr. Tom Taylor, Mr. Henry Kingsley, Mr. George Grove, the Rev. Harry Jones, and a large number of the town and country clergy, as well as of the late Professor's colleagues and associates at King's College, at Cambridge, and at the Working Men's College in Great Ormond-street. Several Nonconformist ministers and laymen were also present to pay their last tribute of respect to this eminent divine, amongst whom were the Revs. J. Baldwin Brown and Mark Wilks.

Soon after the death of Mr. Maurice a memorial was hastily got up, signed by the following, asking that the remains of the deceased might be buried in Westminster Abbey:—

Sir Charles Lyell, W. E. Forster, M.P., W. Cowper-Temple, M.P., Dr. Carpenter, Norman Lockyer, Sir Thomas Watson, M.D., Dr. Andrew Clark, Sir J. P. Kay-Shuttleworth, Sir H. S. Maine; the Master of Trinity, Cambridge; the Master of St. John's, Cambridge; Rev. Canon Lightfoot, Rev. Canon Barry, Professor Munro, Rev. H. Allon, D.D., George MacDonald, George Grove, Rev. H. Montagu Butler, D.D., W. D. Christie, Sir Rutherford Alcock, Lord Talbot de Malahide, Sir Frederick Pollock, the Dean of St. Paul's, R. H. Hutton, Rev. Dr. Norman M'Leod, Rev. F. W. Farrar, Rev. G. G. Bradley, Arthur Helps, James Spedding, the Bishop of St. David's, Sir Thomas Acland, the Archbishop of Dublin, Lord Lyttelton, Rev. W. H. Lyttelton, David Masson, Alfred Tennyson, S. H. Walpole, M.P., Bonamy Price, Sir Andrew S. Waugh, Decimus Burton, W. B. Donne, F. H. Dickinson, the Dean of Ely, Professor Birkbeck, Rev. Christopher Wordsworth, Rev. F. Garden, Robert Browning, H Fawcett, M.P., Thomas Woolner, the Master of Sidney Sussex College, Rev. Professor Selwyn, and Rev. Professor Westcott.

Dean Stanley had already given the necessary permission; but Mr. Maurice's family, while gratefully acknowledging the respect thus shown to his memory, expressed a decided preference for a private funeral at Highgate, and accordingly no further step was taken in the matter.

The following particulars relating to the last hours of the late Mr. Maurice appear in the *Guardian*:—

Mr. Maurice had been suffering for some weeks from an illness caused by internal obstruction, and had more than once been in serious danger. Having rallied somewhat from the first attacks, he was removed from Cambridge to London, and spent his last days at the house of his nieces, the Misses Sterling, in Bolton-row. Last Saturday he was pronounced by his physician to be better than he had been since his removal. But on Sunday he was attacked by pleurisy, and in the evening it became evident that the vital powers were failing fast. In the night he requested that his friend Mr. Ll. Davies should be sent for to administer the Holy Communion, but he desired to postpone the partaking till his sons, who had been summoned, should be present to join in it. When Mr. Davies arrived he had already

become unconscious, and he expired peacefully a little before seven a.m.

A correspondent has sent us the following, including an extract from a sermon preached last Sunday morning by Rev. Thomas Hancock, at St. Stephen's, Lewisham:—"Mr. Hancock may be taken as a spokesman for both the High and Broad sections of the Church of England, for he is identified with both, and is known to a numerous circle, though a select one, as one of the most cultivated and liberal of living clergymen. We are quite disposed to agree with what he says as to the universality of Mr. Maurice's sympathies and influence, and to claim some considerable credit for this to his early association with Dissenters, and his life-long contact with them, as well as with all classes of his fellow-countrymen. We know that Mr. Maurice's influence among Dissenters has been very great. It has led many to join his own communion, but it has also enabled many others to feel more rest in their own, by strengthening in them the consciousness of the perpetual living presence of Christ among us as the Guide and Inspirer of all who seek to do His will. Already he is being canonised as surely and as sacredly as any of the ancients whose names are enshrined in the most cherished memories of the Church. Men of all classes speak of him as of a departed prophet; who has spoken his message, and now, with words of peace and benediction on his lips, has ascended to the skies." Mr. Hancock's topic was the greeting of "Peace be with you," which Jesus pronounced so many times after His resurrection; and which, by charging His disciples to bless and absolve mankind, he left as a legacy for the Church. Our correspondent adds, "I do not profess assent to the *soupçon* of sacerdotalism in Mr. Hancock's words while reproducing them for your reader's perusal":—

When could I more fitly point out to you this aspect of our office than on the first Sunday on which the world has been emptied of the presence of him who more than any of his contemporaries, almost any of his predecessors, realised in its fulness this aspect of the sacerdotal office. Early on Easter Monday God called to Himself, and on Friday morning we laid in the grave, the mortal body of that holy priest and great saint of God who, more profoundly yet more secretly than any man of this generation, has affected the entire life of the English people. In him, first after the lapse of many generations, when it began to seem that the Providence of God had made it impossible that such an influence could ever again reach all the springs of religious, social, intellectual, and moral life, appeared again by the love and grace of God that wonderful universality which characterised the influence of the greatest fathers and doctors of the Church. His vast power upon this generation passed beyond the boundaries of the Church, and, striking its living roots profoundly into the universal life of the nation, again connected every party in Church and State, every class of men in the order of English society, every problem of human consciences, every sphere of social and intellectual activity, with the everlasting Gospel and the ancient faith of the Church. From his "Subscription no Bondage," in 1835, to his loving defence of the Athanasian Hymn in the last few days, not only theology, but the higher politics, art, philosophy, literature, poetry, the study of the physical sciences, the difficult relations of classes, the condition of the poor, even the beliefs of the Protestant sects, have been affected and changed by his marvellous but hidden and quiet power. Thousands upon thousands have been for years, and are at this hour, converted, uplifted, grounded in hope and faith in God, and in love to all mankind, and delivered from despair of the future of the faith and of the Church, who have scarcely known or do not know his name. Since the news fell upon the nation that he had been taken away by God, numbers of Englishmen would have felt as if they were going about in an emptied world, but for the faith which they could never have learnt but from him, that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. A century must pass before the whole breadth of his influence can be recognised. How fit it was that, in the wise disposition of God, he, by whom so many thousands were brought back to lively faith in the Resurrection and the Life should be taken into rest at Easter! How fit it was that the very last conscious act on earth of him who again brought so many to see in the benediction of men and absolution of men in the name of God, the great end of the priest's office, should be the sacerdotal act of blessing those about his deathbed. Immediately before the losing of consciousness, by a supreme effort he gathered himself together, and lifting up his hands, repeated audibly the Eucharistic benediction:—"The peace of God which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always." And then he added, with emphasis, as if for the last time in this world he took the whole world into his bosom—"be with *us all*."

We think (remarks our correspondent) this narrative of the good man's last hours one of the most touching and impressive we ever heard. Such "sublime repression of himself," such noble carelessness about the state of his own soul,—such a glorious trust while leaving his loved ones encompassed by the peace and blessing of the Father, Son, and Spirit. It was wonderfully characteristic of him to die with the words of his Church on his lips, not his own. The tenderness and humility which shone with such a sweet and penetrating lustre during his whole life reached its climax in the quiet beauty and grandeur of this "supreme and glorious hour."

The *Athenæum* says most of the newspapers have mentioned that the late Professor Maurice was in early life the author of a novel called, "Eustace Conway; or, the Brother and Sister." We believe we are not going too far in telling the following story about it. Mr. Maurice sold the novel to the late Mr. Bentley somewhere about the year 1830; but the excitement caused by the Reform Bill being unfavourable to light literature, Mr. Bentley did not issue it till 1834, when he had quite lost sight of its author, then a curate in Warwickshire. The villain of the novel was called Capt. Marryat; and Mr. Maurice, who first learned of the publication of his book from a review in our columns (*Athen.* No. 335, p. 230), had soon the pleasure of receiving a challenge from the celebrated Captain Marryat. Great was the latter's astonishment on learning that the anonymous author of "Eustace Conway" had never heard of the biographer of "Peter Simple," and, being in holy orders, was obliged to decline to indulge in a duel.

Judgment in the Bennett case, says the *Rock*, cannot now be expected before the end of April.

It appears that the Church Association having declined even to take the opinion of counsel on the question of the surplice and black gown, a movement has been made in Manchester with a view to obtain a judical decision on this vexed question.

ROMAN CATHOLIC HOPES.—Monsignor Capel delivered a lecture on Sunday in St. Saviour's Church, Dublin, in the presence and under the patronage of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland and Lady O'Hagan, on "The gradual conversion of England to the Roman Catholic Church," which conversion, he said, was steadily progressing.

SUNDAY-SCHOOLS AND POOR-RATES.—At a meeting of the Islington Auxiliary Sunday-school Union last week it was reported that the parochial officers had issued warrants against three of the largest of the union schools for the recovery of poor-rates. It was resolved to submit to distraint rather than pay the money.

THE OLD CATHOLICS IN FRANCE.—The priest Junqua has held a conference at Bergerac on the Syllabus. Twelve hundred people were present, including several priests. A letter from Monseigneur Wallon, the President of the Committee of Old Catholics of Paris, condemns as illegal Archbishop Donnet's interdiction upon MM. Junqua and Monts for wearing ecclesiastical dress. A forcible remonstrance has been addressed to the Tribune of Bordeaux, by the Abbé Giscos, curé of Touillebourg, protesting against the archbishop's orders to the priests Junqua and Monts having been sent by a police-officer.

THE CENTRAL NONCONFORMISTS' COMMITTEE AND THE ENDOWED SCHOOLS COMMISSIONERS.—The officers of this committee have been for some time considering the best method of action they could adopt with regard to the endowed school schemes now before the country, and have requested the commissioners to receive a deputation in order that a complete statement of the Nonconformist objections to the commissioners' schemes which had been issued might be laid before them. The commissioners have consented to receive a deputation to-morrow, April 11, at twelve o'clock. Manchester, Liverpool, and other towns have been asked to send representatives. A conference will afterwards be held between the deputation and the members of Parliament favourable to the Nonconformist views, to decide as to the Parliamentry action to be taken.

THE NONCONFORMISTS AND THE GOVERNMENT.—The Nonconformists of Wolverhampton have obtained an interview with Messrs. Villiers and Weguelin upon the forthcoming legislation relating to measures in which they take interest. Mr. Villiers spoke of the difficulty the House of Commons experienced in deciding upon questions of that class when such representative men as Mr. Miall and Mr. Morley did not go for what the deputation demanded. The deputation replied that Mr. Miall had long ceased to represent the Nonconformists; in fact, had for some time misrepresented them.—*Daily News of Thursday.* [Next day our contemporary stated that its local reporter had blundered. Mr. Villiers spoke of Mr. Baines, and not of Mr. Miall. The deputation said, "Mr. Baines had ceased to represent us; Mr. Miall does represent us."]

THE ATHANASIAN CREED.—The damnatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed are to be discussed in Convocation about the 20th of this month. The archbishops of both provinces, the Bishops of Manchester, Ripon, and St. David's, the Deans of Canterbury, Westminster, Durham, and Chester, three out of the four Regius Professors of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, and many other eminent clergymen, wish to remove the clauses from the creed, or the creed itself from the public service of the Church. A counter movement has, however, been inaugurated by several clergymen who desire the retention of the creed and the objectionable clauses; and, in view of the forthcoming discussion, the Rev. R. F. W. Molesworth, vicar of Todmorden, Lancashire, and others, have drawn a petition praying Convocation to "remove either the damnatory clauses from the creed, or the creed itself from the public service of the Church of England."

SOCIETY FOR THE RELIEF OF THE NECESSITOUS WIDOWS OF PROTESTANT DISSENTING MINISTERS.—The hundred and thirty-ninth annual general meeting of the above institution was held on Easter Tuesday, at the offices of the Sunday School Union, Old Bailey; W. Edwards, Esq., treasurer, in the chair. The secretary, Mr. C. Theodore Jones, read the report, which stated that, from the time it started, in 1733, until the present, the society had been the means of supplying the most urgent needs of thousands of widows, who but for such assistance must have sustained the severest personal privation. The managers thought it right to state that no society since established either proposes to itself or effects the ends contemplated by this. The report concluded by appealing for increased pecuniary assistance. The balance at the close of the last year was 337*l.* 10s. The income for the present year amounted to 4,090*l.* 6s. 8d.; the grants during the year had been 2,527*l.*, and the expenses of the society 140*l.* 1s. 8d., leaving a balance in the hands of the treasurer of 1,760*l.* 5s. 10d. The report, upon the motion of Mr. P. Cadly, was unanimously adopted. The officers for the ensuing year were then elected, and a vote of thanks to the chairman brought the proceedings to a termination. The society is managed in the most impartial way by the representatives of the three denominations.

"REVISION" IN THE IRISH CHURCH.—The report of the Committee of Revision of the formularies of the Irish Church has at last been laid before the General Synod now assembled. The committee consisted of the bishops and a limited number of clergymen and laymen, who held a great many meetings in the months of October and December, 1871, and in February and March of the present year, and discussed the communion service, the baptismal service, the ordinal, and the visitation of the sick. A great variety of propositions was made, and divisions taken upon some of them, the bishops generally voting together. But the committee were not able to draw up any report, and they simply lay their minutes before the body. The greatest of their difficulties seems to have been the baptismal service, as to which a vast number of verbal changes and new rubrics were suggested by Lord Plunket, several of the bishops, Master Brooke, Dean of Clonfort, Rev. Dr. Reichel, and others. The nearest approach to a consent upon a change was the adoption of a motion by the Rev. Lord Plunket to substitute for the words, "Seeing that this child is regenerate," the words, "Seeing that this child has received the sacrament of regeneration." This was voted for by twenty-one against eleven. The bishops, who were nominated to revise the Lectionary, adopted the English form, and the committee sanctioned this step; the prelates referred, in making their recommendation, to the "great advantage of it in the way of constituting a bond of union between the Churches of England and Ireland."

THE OLD CATHOLICS IN GERMANY.—A letter from Wiesbaden, dated the 31st of March, says:—"To-day the first Old Catholic divine service in this town took place in the Evangelical Church. Mass was celebrated by Priest Kühn of Kaiserlautern; the sermon was preached by Professor Reinkens. Nearly 4,000 persons were present." At Insterburg, says the Berlin correspondent of the *Daily News*, Rector Grunert, who is now an acknowledged member of the "Old" Catholic Church, has held a first service, for which the Lutheran Church was placed at his disposal, and all the Catholic soldiers of the garrison, without a single exception, were present. In his sermon he treated the Pope as a heretic, who no longer belonged to the Church of which he formerly was the head. With regard to his bishop he has made a difference, and he has even addressed a letter to the prelate, in which he proposes a peaceful co-operation in all things except the exposition of the dogma. The attendance of civilians in the church was very large. It may safely be assumed that the same thing will happen in every case where the clergyman of a garrison chooses not to submit to the Ultramontanes. It is said that frequent Cabinet Councils are being held at Berlin on the necessity of legislation bearing on religious questions, and with the view of devising some compromise in connection with the meeting of the German Parliament. According to the Prussian code, excommunication is not legal without the previous consent of the Government. On the other hand, by the 15th Article of the Constitution, religious communities or societies are guaranteed in possession of their autonomy and liberty, while Article 12 guarantees to every Prussian subject religious freedom without prejudice to his civil and political rights, which necessarily restricts the power of excommunication. It is requisite, therefore, that some provisional agreement, or concordat, should be arranged between the civil power and the clerical hierarchy. If that cannot be done there will without doubt be a still wider, indeed an absolute, breach between the Prussian State, and in the long run the German Empire, and the Roman Catholic Church.

ARCHDEACON DENISON ON THE CRISIS OF THE CHURCH.—Early on Monday the Ven. Archdeacon Denison held a visitation at Taunton, and delivered a charge to the clergy of the Deanery of Taunton. In the course of his address, the archdeacon said:—"A time of transition is commonly a time of delusion. Those who have grown up under a system which is passing away do not readily incline to the belief that it is passing away, and shut their eyes to the evidence of an accumulated and accumulating experience. It is thus that men cling to the belief that the old relations of State to Church here in England are not passing away, notwithstanding that they are passing away is not a matter of opinion, but of fact. All I will say here is that there is one thing worse than disestablishment and disendowment, and that is establishment and endowment which shall be of no particular form and faith. There are a great many of us inside the Church as well as out of it who are labouring to keep the Church established and endowed on this condition only—on the condition, that is to say, that it be no longer Catholic, but a compound of 'all denominations,' and therefore creedless and unsacramental, so that it may become 'national,' not in the tru sense of the word, but in the sense of including all

religions and no religion. I am not speaking thus of the Church of England as she is herself, but as she is by law established. These two things are very different things. The Church of England as reformed, that is, formed again upon the primitive model, is a part of the Church Catholic, and has existed in this country from very early times of Christianity. What is called the Establishment is three hundred years old. It is an accident of the Church only, not the essence of it. If any man care to know when I finally ceased to think the Establishment worth keeping—and, more than this, when I came to the conclusion that it was bad for true religion that it should be kept, and why I came to think so—I will tell him. The 'when' was in 1870; the 'why' was the adoption by bishops, clergy, and people in the name of the Church of the (so-called) 'Elementary Education Act.' When I saw these things done, *favente et adjuvante episcopatu, clero, populo*, I ceased to think the Establishment worth preserving. Whatever may be the material advantages of the nineteenth century, I doubt its possessing the advantages, intellectual or moral, which are commonly claimed for it. Certainly standing fast and holding the truth at whatever cost is not a conspicuous feature of its history. Compromise has laid hold of all politics, and is eating its hateful way into religious truth."

Religious and Denominational News.

The Rev. R. S. Ashton, B.A., Weymouth, having accepted the office of Secretary to the Evangelical Continental Society, will relinquish his charge at the close of the present month, and enter on his official duties May 1st, 1872.

Tolmer's-square Congregational Church.—A recognition service, in connection with the settlement of the Rev. A. B. Camm as pastor of Tolmer's-square church, was held on Tuesday evening. The Rev. J. C. Harrison presided, and addresses were delivered by the Rev. Henry Simon, the late pastor, and Professor Scott, of Lancashire Independent College.

West Yorkshire Congregational Union.—The annual conference of the West Riding of Yorkshire Congregational Union was opened at Sheffield yesterday. The Rev. Bryan Dale, of Halifax, presided. There were about 500 delegates present. The three unions of Yorkshire were amalgamated into one body, under the title of the Yorkshire Congregational Union. On the motion of Dr. Mellor, of Halifax, a resolution in favour of the disestablishment of the Church of England was unanimously passed.

Tonbridge.—A new Baptist chapel at Tonbridge was opened on Friday week. The Rev. J. Wigner and the Rev. Clement Bailhache preached. The public meeting was presided over by B. Barrow, Esq., and addresses were delivered by Revs. W. Usher, C. Bailhache, J. Collins, J. Turner, the pastor, and other friends. The building will comfortably seat 400. The total cost, exclusive of the land, will be about 1,500*l.* The collections of the day amounted to 63*l.*, leaving 670*l.* to be raised. Two gentlemen present promised 20*l.* each, if three others would do the same, thus reducing the debt 100*l.* if it could be accomplished.

A Good Example.—On Tuesday, April 2, being the Rev. D. Harding's birthday, a few friends connected with his church and congregation at Tunbridge quietly forwarded to him the receipt and certificate of the Pastors' Retiring Fund for 10*l.* 10*s.*, thus making him a life member of the fund. This "pleasing surprise" was all the more grateful to him for its being done unostentatiously, and the gift was all the more graceful on the part of his people, seeing that Mr. Harding's pastorate at Tunbridge has not yet extended over a year. This good example might be followed by many other churches with no great sacrifice on their part, while thereby many a minister's heart would be made glad, and his hands strengthened for doing God's work.

Coventry.—It is with great pleasure that we record the acceptance by the Rev. W. T. Rosevear of a most earnest invitation to reoccupy the pulpit of St. Michael's Baptist Chapel in this city. We understand that the reverend gentleman accepted the pastorate on the condition that the congregation would, within twelve months, entirely liquidate the existing debt on the building of 1,600*l.*, and that they have proved their determination to secure his services by contributing within a few days between seven and eight hundred pounds towards this object. We are also glad to learn that they have been most liberally aided by some of our leading citizens, making in all, up to this date, the handsome sum of twelve hundred pounds.—*Coventry Times*, April 3.

Greenwich.—South-street Baptist Church, Greenwich, which has been erected for the congregation of the Rev. B. Davies, was opened on Thursday week. The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon preached in the afternoon from Luke xii. 49. The church (which will comfortably accommodate 1,000 persons) was crowded in every part. After the service about 1,000 persons sat down to tea in the spacious hall beneath the church, and in the evening Mr. William Olney presided over an enthusiastic public meeting. At this meeting W. R. Huntley, Esq. (Treasurer) stated that the total cost of the church, together with two good halls, three class-rooms, and three vestries, was a little over 4,000*l.*, and that 1,700*l.* was still required to clear off all debt. Before the close of the evening promises were received for 850*l.* of this sum, leaving a balance still to be raised of 850*l.* Addresses were delivered by the Revs. J. T. Wigner, G. T. Edgley, W. J. Denniss, and the pastor.

Reading.—Services were held on Thursday evening, March 21, welcoming and recognising the settlement of the Rev. W. Anderson, late of Warkworth, Northumberland, as pastor of the Baptist church in King's-road, Reading. Tea was provided in the large new schoolroom, to which over 200 sat down. Afterwards a public meeting was held in the chapel, presided over by the Rev. G. Rogers, Theological Tutor of the Pastors' College. A number of neighbouring ministers were present. Mr. Philip Davies, senior deacon, made a statement on behalf of the church; the Rev. W. Anderson followed. An eloquent address was then given on the "Equipment and Work of the Christian Minister," by the Rev. R. Glover, of Bristol, followed by some weighty words of counsel to the church from the Rev. G. Rogers. The various ministers of the town and neighbourhood then addressed the meeting in kind and fraternal speeches welcoming the new pastor, and assuring him of their co-operation.

Matlock Bank.—The Rev. H. Starmer, on leaving Matlock Bank for his new charge at Teignmouth, has been presented by the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society with the late Dean Milman's "History of the Jews," and the Rev. Baldwin Brown's "First Principles of Ecclesiastical Truth"; by the committee of the working men's reading-room with a beautiful black marble inlaid inkstand; by the church and congregation and other friends with a handsome purse containing 40*l.*, bearing an inscription of gratitude and affection. The farewell meeting (presided over by the Rev. F. R. Bellamy) was addressed by the Revs. W. Crosbie, M.A. (Derby), T. G. Potter (Brixton); by H. N. Heath, Esq. (London); by the Revs. W. Young (Wirksworth), F. Slight (Wesleyan), A. B. Mathews (Methodist Free Church), S. T. Meadows (Primitive Methodist), R. Nurse (Bakewell), and Jos. Barton, all of whom spoke in the highest terms of Mr. Starmer's character and work, of his untiring efforts in removing the heavy debt from the chapel, and the great regret felt on his leaving the neighbourhood.

The Special Services in Theatres.—The nineteenth season of the religious services in the London theatres, initiated under the auspices of the Earl of Shaftesbury, were brought to a close by the council on Sunday week. It is proposed by the committee to raise a fund of 10,000*l.* to aid local movements for the establishment of mission halls in densely-populated neighbourhoods. The idea is to spend as little as possible in bricks and mortar, and to plant the rooms in the midst of the courts and alleys from which the mass of the people never stir out on the Sundays. Lord Shaftesbury's view of the movement is expressed in a letter from which the following is an extract:—"Every day's experience strengthens my conviction that by no other agency can the vast masses of our city be leavened with the great truths of Christianity. The peculiarities of people must be met by peculiarities of action. There is a perpetual flow of immigration from the country, and a perpetual movement of families from one part to another. Such a system of life cannot be encountered by any ordinary and inflexible regulations. The object is to save London from the issues of Paris, social, moral, political and religious."

The Baptist Anniversaries take the lead of the religious meetings. The Baptist Building Fund will have a meeting on the 19th inst., in Bloomsbury Chapel, the Rev. S. H. Booth presiding. On Sunday, the 21st, there will be special services in the various chapels of the metropolis, and on Monday the first session of the Baptist Union will be held at the Union House, Dr. Thomas, of Pontypool, presiding. The Bible Translation Society will meet at Kingsgate-street Chapel, Holborn, on the evening of the same day. On Tuesday, the 23rd, the British and Irish Baptist Home Mission hold their annual meeting in Bloomsbury Chapel, G. T. Kemp, Esq., in the chair. The members' meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society is appointed for Tuesday; on Wednesday there will be a missionary breakfast, followed by the annual sermon at Bloomsbury Chapel, which will be preached by the Rev. Charles Stanford. On the morning of Thursday the Union meetings will be resumed, when a paper will be read by Dr. Culross, on "The Divine Order of Christian Work," and the friends will dine at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. On Thursday evening there will be the usual missionary meeting at Exeter Hall, Sir Donald M'Leod, C.B., presiding; and on Friday evening the Young Men's Missionary Society will hold their anniversary meeting at the Weigh House Chapel, E. Rawlings, Esq., in the chair. Amongst the missionaries who will speak at these two meetings are the Revs. Dr. Turner, of Samoa, W. Wilson, of Fiji, B. Millard, of Jamaica, and A. McKenna, of India.

Islington Auxiliary Sunday-school Union.—The annual meeting of this association was held on Thursday night at Union Chapel, Compton-terrace; the Rev. Dr. Edmonds in the chair. From a report which was read by Mr. C. E. Good, it appeared that the number of schools in union was 60. The number of teachers (including officers) was 1,608, an increase of 78; the average number of attendants in the morning, 544, an increase of 25; afternoon, 1,254, an increase of 109; evening, 71, an increase of 9; number who were church-members, 1,343, an increase of 68; number who had formerly been scholars, 1,213, an increase of 47. The total number of scholars on the books was 17,150, an increase of 539; average attendance—morning, 4,047, an increase of 74; afternoon, 11,313, an increase of 632; evening, 753, an increase of 165; number under fifteen years of age, 2,488, an increase of 31; infants, 4,539, an increase of 406; number who have joined the church during the last year, 159, a decrease of 5. The report announced that the competitive examinations of Sunday-scholars on the "Life and Times of Elijah" had proved a great success. The number of candidates had been 1,066, of whom 429 girls and 304 boys had actually presented themselves for examination. Discussing the difficult problem how to retain the elder scholars, the committee recommended interesting lectures on week-day evenings, but expressed a hope that the attractive would not be allowed to outweigh the useful, or the secular to exclude the spiritual. Addresses were delivered by the Rev. Mark Wilks, the Rev. H. Crassweller, Mr. Cork, Mr. Groser, and other ministers and gentlemen. The prizes were also distributed amongst the successful candidates.

Harthill.—On Good Friday the foundation-stone of a preaching station under the auspices of the Sheffield Village Preachers' Association, to be used also as a school, was laid at Harthill. The ground was liberally given by Mr. S. Duckworth, who resides in the village. The new building is to accommodate 150 persons. The ceremony was performed by Mr. Duckworth, who hoped the building would be a blessing to the neighbourhood. The Rev. J. Calvert said they were not there to promote any particular interest, nor did they wish simply to educate the inhabitants, though they hoped that object would be gained. About 100 persons afterwards sat down to tea, after which an adjournment was made to the Wesleyan chapel, which had been kindly lent for the occasion. The place was well filled. Mr. J. Askham (the secretary of the association) presided, and said it was intended in a few years to erect a chapel in front of the room they were about to build, which would then be used as a schoolroom. The Rev. R. Stainton referred with pleasure to the fact of a meeting in connection with the Independent denomination being held in the Wesleyan chapel, and hoped that state of feeling would continue. They did not wish to empty any place but the public-house, and hoped the denominations would unite with each other in waging war against the world, the flesh, and the devil. The Rev. J. Calvert delivered an address on "Congregationalism." Other addresses were also delivered, after which the Chairman proposed a vote of thanks to the Wesleyan friends for granting the use of their chapel, and also for their presence. Mr. Storey (a Wesleyan), in responding to the vote, said the Congregationalists were heartily welcome to the use of the chapel, and so was any other body that identified themselves with Christian work. A number of friends were present from Sheffield, Anston, Killamarsh, and the neighbourhood.

Christchurch.—On Good Friday the fifth anniversary of the Congregational Church, Christchurch, was celebrated by a large gathering of the congregation and its friends in the church, under the presidency of Rear-Admiral Sir James Sulivan, K.C.B. The gallant admiral was supported by the Rev. J. Fletcher, the Revs. T. Poole, of Lymington, J. Dunlop, of Ringwood, J. S. Pearsall, of London, F. Baron, of Ripley, and E. Pickford, of Pokesdown, while among the assemblage were many of the leading Nonconformists, not only of Christchurch but of the neighbouring towns of Bournemouth and Ringwood. Although the weather was unfavourable, both this and the tea-meeting in the Town Hall were crowded. The meeting was commenced by the singing of a hymn, and prayer by the Rev. J. S. Pearsall, after which the chairman proceeded to address the meeting in a characteristic speech. Referring to the object that had brought them together, he said that he had been informed by their worthy pastor that that was the 215th anniversary of the spiritual communion existing in this place. He thought that such a fact was one that ought to make them thankful, and not only so but that it was a proof that there was a vitality in the religious principles there indicated, which could never be destroyed. In the course of his subsequent remarks the gallant admiral referred to the great missionary work done by Dissenters in the rural districts, especially in Cornwall. In respect to the Education Act he was obliged to admit that it would never do for the rates of this country to be devoted to denominational teaching. Those who supported this system of teaching were inconsistent, because while they strove hard for it in this country they denied it to the Irish people. The only consistent thing, therefore, for them as Protestants was to do away with denominational teaching in this country, and then they could consistently oppose the handing over the schools of Ireland to the Romanist priesthood. He read an extract from a letter written by the late Mr. Denison (the philanthropist), who during his life was well known in Bournemouth, who, on seeing how the secular system of education worked in Switzerland, although he had previously been opposed to the conscience clause, even declared that the secular was the only reasonable system for a national one. Referring to the Romanising tendencies of the Anglican party in the Church of England, he affirmed, amid loud cheers, that the only way to uproot it was by the disestablishment of the English Church. If the laity had done their duty when these errors first began, such a remedy would not now have been needed, but when it was

borne in mind that in Bournemouth there were four or five Anglican confessionals, and that they were found in large numbers among all Anglican communities, they would agree with him that there was a necessity for a radical remedy. The confessional was the stronghold of the Papacy, and the institution of it among the Ritualists was with the object of bringing the people under the subjection of the priests, as they called themselves. He had a little book which he believed was often put into the hands of very small children by some of these people, in which the most vicious suggestions were made to their minds, and he earnestly hoped that if any parent bebecame aware of such a proceeding on the part of these Jesuits that he would punish him most severely. He looked forward with some dread as to what would be the result of this tendency among Churchmen, but trusted that speedily it would be remedied by the means he had before indicated —by disestablishment. The Rev. J. Fletcher congratulated the meeting upon the presence of Admiral Sulivan, and said that they had been delighted to hear their own principles as Nonconformists so clearly expounded. (Cheers.) He noticed that some of those present were astonished when their chairman referred to this as the 215th anniversary of this church as a spiritual community, and no doubt they would be glad if he could provo the assertion. (Hear, hear.) He found then that in Dr. Williams' Library a book existed on Justification by Faith, which bore on the title-page the date of 1657, and written by the Rev. John Warner, M.A., of Magdalen College, Oxford, who describes himself as "Pastor of the Church of Christ at Christchurch, in Hantshire." This was in the time of the Protectorate, when the Church of England was not as it is now. After some further historical reminiscences, the speaker said that their present place of worship, built in 1867 at a cost of more than 4,000*l.*, was entirely free from debt. He congratulated them on the success of their enterprise, and expressed the thanks of his people to those friends who had come forward to their help with such noble sums, naming some of the principal, such as Mr. Moser, Mr. John Kemp-Welch, Mr. Coote, Messrs. Robertshaw, Mr. Jupe, Mr. Morley and others. The proceeds of the anniversary would be devoted to their day-schools, which had never received a farthing of public money during their continued existence of fifty years, and would remain free from all connection with Government aid or control, until a perfectly fair, equal and just system of national education should be established by the State—(cheers)—a system by which the secular or literary element alone would be supervised and aided by the Government, while the religious element would be provided entirely by voluntary effort. (Renewed cheering.) Several other addresses were delivered, and, after a vote of thanks to the chairman, the meeting concluded with singing and prayer. The amount of collections on this day and on the following Sunday, when the Rev. W. H. Jellie, of Gosport, preached the anniversary sermons, was 30*l.* 5s. 4d.

Correspondence.

OUR FARM LABOURERS.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

SIR,—The writer of the article on the "Warwickshire Revolt" in your last number must pardon my stating that I think he has but little real knowledge of agricultural labourers. He is pleased to say that they "vegetate in hopeless misery," are an "abject class," with "Bœotian mind" living in "servile poverty," and expresses the hope for "poor Hodge" that "men, instead of falling into decay, will, in future generations, resemble the old British oak," &c., &c., and I know not what beside. Now, Sir, with regard to these flowers of rhetoric, I will only say that they would most fittingly embellish a leader in the *Daily Telegraph*, but are not, I think, suited to the pages of the *Nonconformist*.

The simple fact of the case is that the English farm-labourer does his work surrounded with conditions of life of the most favourable kind, and in order to tempt him to exchange these conditions for the unwholesome surroundings of a town, higher wages must be paid or he will not go. But this higher wage is only just sufficient for its purpose, and those who have lived both in the country and the town know that the average farm-labourer is as well off as the average labourer in our large towns; that is, as well off as the carmen, porters, dock labourers, and others whose work is like his. I do not, of course, assert that his condition is equal to that of the highly-trained and skilled artisan.

Happily, since the establishment of free trade, a steady improvement has taken place in the position of the working classes, and the farm-labourer has felt its influence, as, indeed, it was impossible that he should not feel it. At the present moment wages are from fifteen to eighteen per cent. higher than they were twenty years ago, and from the demand now existing for labour, and the *increase of wages in the towns*, it seems probable that a further and corresponding increase will take place generally in the wages of farm-labourers, and it is to be hoped will be gradually but permanently established.

This, Sir, is really all that needs to be said upon the matter. If for the moment labour is paid too low a wage in agricultural districts relatively to others, the true remedy is for labourers to move to the towns or emigrate, when the employers of labour will soon find it their interest to raise wages sufficiently to retain the labour they require. The only question is whether this shall be done in peace by quiet withdrawal of labour, or by the more noisy and warlike machinery of unions and strikes. To me it seems clear that it is better for both men and masters that war should be avoided. As to vast and numerous combinations, no doubt the labourers have a right to make them just as a nation has a right to establish a large standing army. But the worst of it is that the one like the other leads to combination in return, and often ultimate war, which damages both parties, and is a wasteful way of settling the question.

In the meantime, Sir, allow me to protest in the strongest manner against the absurd libels I frequently read upon the farm-labourers of England. In any class there are many stupid men, and I dare say that labourers in different localities differ greatly according to the influences under which they have been trained. But I say, without hesitation, that in character and intelligence our farm-labourers are quite equal to their brethren in the towns. For many years I have lived in frequent and habitual intercourse with men working on my farm, and whom I am glad to call my friends. I do not pay more than the current rate of wages—now twelve shillings a week — which no doubt represents an actual average weekly wage to the man alone, independent of any earnings by his family, of about fourteen shillings a week throughout the year, beside some perquisites. But these men are perfectly acquainted with the relative value of wages, and, I believe, consider that one shilling a week in a country village is practically worth as much as one shilling and sixpence in a large town. At any rate, they have brothers, cousins, and sons in the large towns of England, and often in America and the colonies, with whom they are in constant correspondence, and no very great discrepancy can exist without quickly being felt. For my own part, I feel very keenly the difficulty that must sometimes arise with our labourers, both in country and town, when the family is young and numerous; and I shall heartily rejoice in a gradual and moderate rise of wages. But certainly, if at the present time called on to choose between the position of a farm labourer at fourteen shillings a week and that of a carman in a large town at twenty-one shillings, I should choose the farm-labourer's lot.

I am, Sir, your obdient servant,

C. P. TEBBUTT.

Bluntisham, Hunts, April 8, 1872.

FACT v. SENTIMENT.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

SIR,—In accepting the challenge contained in your last article upon this subject, I wish to acknowledge your courtesy in allowing me space to express at length views at variance with your own. I am still unable to endorse your estimate of the value of the reports of H.M. school inspectors as supporting your assertion that "religious teaching in day-schools is for the most part utterly ineffective, and calculated to beget in early days a permanent dislike for the things of God." You contend that I have not refuted the testimony of the inspectors. But what do the seventeen quotations from their reports amount to? You must admit that they do not prove that *all* schools give religious teaching of a formal and injurious nature, nor do they prove that in the cases cited a different state of things was impossible. They show that in some National schools (and all the schools cited belong to the Church of England) the formality of the Establishment has extended from the Church to the school, and from the clergyman to the master; they prove that reading is untaught in some schools, and the children are allowed to make sense into nonsense unchecked; they prove that it is a difficult thing for the peculiar tenets of the Church as contained in the catechism to be appreciated by the children; and they prove, to use your apt illustration, that a meal taken in a hurry promotes indigestion. You have made out a case, it seems to me, not for the dinner to be postponed until the following Sunday, but to be eaten daily *with less hurry*

You ask me to produce reports of the inspectors in which "clear, definite, and apparently well-founded testimony is given of deep spiritual impressions produced by the religious teaching"—in other words, you invite me to refute your statement of positive harm being done by religious teaching by producing evidence of positive good of the deepest spiritual kind. My answer is that I do not claim for religious teaching as usually given in day-schools now, nor such as I expect to see given in the future, a place equal in importance to that imparted in the Sunday-school. I place, however, great importance on Scriptural facts being communicated and explained as a groundwork for more spiritual teaching afterwards. You do not need me to point out that *spiritual* results cannot b estimated by an inspector who simply examines for *mental* results once a year. As to the value of combined religious and secular teaching, I point you to our ragged-schools. The children for whom school boards are established are the most degraded of all children, and it is no slight argument against secular schools that all those who have dealt successfully with this class—from John Pounds, the cobbler, to the Earl of Shaftesbury—have used as their most powerful instrument religious teaching. And no wonder. The object of education is not to make reading, writing, and calculating machines, but to form the character of the young that they may grow up to be men and women worthy of the name. I fail to see any force in your remark that a Bible lesson on Sunday will be more interesting and useful, because the Bible remains unread during the week. On the contrary, I endorse heartily the statement of Mr. Baines, that the instruction of "God's own Word, given 'line upon line and precept upon precept,' can alone mould the heart and character, make the rising race good, useful, and happy, and conduct them through this world to a better." You doubt, apparently, any spiritual results coming from day-schools; but, with all the deficiencies incident to school teachers in this as well as all other subjects, I am bound to testify that, in this neighbourhood at least, every Sunday-school teacher is indebted to day-school teachers for their efficient help.

You ask me to define what religious teaching I would have in day-schools. In respect to denominational schools I have already pointed out the undoubted right of the committee and subscribers to settle that for themselves. Religious education by school boards in their own rate-supported schools, I confess sounds contrary to Nonconformist principles as usually inculcated; but it must be borne in mind that we have altered our position in supporting a compulsory system of education. We have undertaken to remedy a great evil, and we have admitted that the Government through school boards shall exercise a parental control over the uncared-for juvenile population. For the local authorities to carry out this system thoroughly, religious instruction must be given. The prisoner confined by the State, and the pauper under the control of the guardians, and the pauper children in district schools, have all religious teaching for which the public pay; and if children are compelled to attend a particular school, you must endow the authorities with power to give some religious education. It is fortunate that in England there is a common platform of Evangelical truth which is agreeable to a very large section of the community, and the conscience clause will meet the scruples of the Rationalist and the Unitarian. Jews and Roman Catholics are equally dissatisfied with secular schools, and very fortunately are anxious to supply and maintain their own. The only aggrieved parties seem to be those who conscientiously object to pay a rate, a fractional portion of which provides religious teaching of which they disapprove. Members of the Peace Society do not hesitate to pay income-tax on the ground of its being levied chiefly for fleets and armies, and I never heard of anyone refusing to pay a poor-rate because the chaplain of the workhouse is paid out of it. Yet to meet these conscientious scruples, I think it would not be found impracticable to allow an affirmation of such scruples to be made before some authority, entitling the ratepayer to deduct from the amount of his rate the small fraction which the religious teaching costs. This I believe to be a solution of the religious difficulty.

In conclusion, allow me to say I did not express satisfaction with the religious teaching of the secular school at Manchester, but I contend that moral and religious teaching must be given upon authority; and I prefer the authority of the Bible to that of the schoolmaster.

I am Sir, your obedient servant,

WM. E. WHITTINGHAM.

Walthamstow, April 6, 1872.

[In reference to the above letter we may remark—1. All the schools cited did *not* belong to the Church of England: see quotations from Mr. Kerr and Mr. Arnold. 2. Our correspondent seems to agree with us pretty much as to the inefficiency, though not perhaps as to the mischief, of so-called religious teaching in day-schools. 3. The children in the Manchester Secular School were of as low a class as those in most ragged-schools. 4. We would not have the Bible unread during the week, but would not have it amongst school tasks. 5. We totally deny that we have in the slightest degree yielded anything of the religious principles of Nonconformity in supporting national and compulsory education. It is precisely because we will not do so that men like our excellent correspondent find fault with us. —ED. *Nonconformist.*]

THE MULTIPLICATION OF SMALL CHURCHES.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

SIR,—I think the time has arrived when public attention should be directed to the unnecessary multiplication of small churches in country villages, because I believe their tendency to be obstructive than otherwise to the growth of piety and Christian character, and this matter can only be remedied, as has been already asserted, by enlightened public opinion.

Your able correspondent "Unsectarian" in his letter has elucidated many points bearing upon the question, all of which I thoroughly endorse, with this proviso—that the "narrow prejudices" and "denominational exclusiveness" are as potent against combination as the "money and property questions." Such prejudices will have to be removed before the matter can be fairly treated. I am now labouring in a small country village where there are in all six separate denominations, including the Established Church, each

segregating their own separate views, and maintaining that their own little Bethel is truly and Scripturally [illegible], according to the "faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Of course, where such a state of things exists, the congregations are small, as well as everything connected with their working and influence. If any one of these churches is fortunate enough to secure the services of a settled minister, he has to struggle to maintain himself; but it does not necessarily follow, as "Unsectarian" would infer, because a minister is underpaid he is also undertrained, although the principle may admit the theory. If the scattered churches were broken up the whole denomination would suffer. Our small congregations act like a reserve force to our larger ones. I know of an instance where a small village church has been the parent of a flourishing town interest, and possibly there are many such instances, so that it is only just to admit that a village pastor is doing good service, which is barely recognised, at the cost of much self-denial, to the denomination at large under which he serves. I cannot see how churches of the same order, *e.g.*, the Independent or Congregational, can be grouped together, because of distance and other difficulties which intervene; but if the different denominations in country districts were united and formed into one church, giving the preference to the oldest established, then one can easily see how the cause of religion may be better served. The difficulties which stand in the way are great:—the Methodist system, of their "plans," very materially prevent the union or combination of village churches—their mode of conducting religious service being dictated by "Conference." Thus the Conference appoints one or more ministers to superintend a circuit, aided by a large number of local preachers, many of whom are worthy of all praise, but a large majority are remarkable for their zeal without knowledge. Where such prejudice exists, as at present in country districts, among the different denominations, any proposal for union, or a remodelling upon a larger and a more general basis, would be considered a mischievous innovation, and meet with strenuous opposition. One denomination alone cannot produce this desirable issue. It must be by the cultivation of an enlightened Christian sentiment in the minds of the people, having one common end in view, viz., the glory of the Divine Master and the welfare of men.—Yours, truly,

A VILLAGE PASTOR.

April 6, 1872.

EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

Sir,—As an Australian colonist, and one who has had experience as an educationalist in that part of the world, permit me to tell a tale of our colonial past.

It was in 1841 that I passed the equator to teach in the bush of Australia. Before my arrival there the Battle of the Sects had commenced.

In the halcyon days, when the Protestant Episcopalian Church was the only one recognised by Government in the Southern settlements, no difficulty existed. As everybody attended the ministrations of the chaplain, so every child was instructed under that gentleman's special superintendence. There was so little religious fervour, or so overwhelming a sense of the dignity of the one and only authorised Church, that the other sections of Christianity simply bowed their heads in silence.

Two men broke into this charmed circle. The first was an Irishman. The second was a Scotchman. The son of Erin came humbly pleading; but the proud Scot flung himself boldly against the citadel of despotism. Father Thierry in 1820 was not acknowledged by the Governor, and never expected recognition, much less support. But he felt deeply the humiliation of his Church in the schools of the colony. Of course he could open classes for his co-religionists, if he would pay the teachers. His sympathy was particularly drawn toward Roman Catholic children in the State Orphan Asylum. One half in that establishment belonged to his communion. Could he not at least enter the walls, and give occasional instruction? He was told that all the scholars there were under the educational training of the Protestant chaplain only.

The justly celebrated Dr. Lang went out to Sydney two or three years after the priest. He was not content to be snubbed, nor silent under usurped dominion. When informed by the Governor of New South Wales that he ought to be thankful for permission to build a church, and that "of the Church of England one of the glories is her toleration," the intrepid Presbyterian mounted the bulwarks of the British Constitution, and boldly asserted his rights. Thus did he reply to General Brisbane's letter:—

Toleration was not the glory of the Church of England, but of the British Constitution. Scotsmen were not, therefore, reduced to the necessity of receiving toleration as a boon from the Church of England; their civil and religious liberties were won for them by the valour of their forefathers.

The storming parties thus, without unison, without fellowship, came from opposite quarters, and made each an independent attack. For a time, however, their schools had to be supported by voluntary contributions. State-aid was given to the schools of the one Church only. Any child could attend them by submission to that dogmatic religious instruction. No "conscience clause" was thought of.

Gradually the Treasury grew more liberal, and a few trifling gratuities were graciously dropped to the outside communions for their ministers and schoolmasters. One year even the Independents obtained 25*l.* toward the salary of one teacher.

But the very relaxation of the purse-strings for the benefit of the humbler brethren without, stirred the wrath of the dominant party, who loudly demanded justice (!) The Legislature were prompt in meeting that demand. It was ordained that in addition to the annual grant of 1*l.* a head in the colony, the Episcopalian Church should have made over to it the enormous amount of one-seventh the land of the entire territory for the maintenance of schools and churches.

This prodigious stride overleaped itself. Rose, Thistle, and Shamrock appealed. The Act was subsequently disallowed. But, while Roman Catholics had their own schools, the friends of Protestant freedom, in 1836, organised the "Australian School Society." This was, in fact, the adaptation of the principles of the British and Foreign School Society. The Scriptures were to be used, but no catechism was to be introduced.

Governor Gipps then sought to unite all parties in one general system. He proposed to give Government aid to all schools permitting the Bible to be read, though without note or comment. This was taking a more liberal ground than that of the British School system, which gave what what was called religious instruction. But, though the bill passed it was never acted upon, because of the strenuous opposition of Romanists and Anglicans.

In 1838 Sir George Gipps tried a compromise. As the Protestants were nearly three to one in the colony, he would give them a certain sum for schools, and the Roman Catholics one-third that amount. This was unjust to the Protestant denominations, who saw no reason for the Church of Rome to have such distinctive privileges. The Bishop of Sydney defeated the plan. He closed an all eloquent speech in the council with these words:—

The schools which, if your Excellency's plans be carried, must be abolished, are to her as her right hand, by which she is to execute the work which is given her to do; or, rather, they are the artery through which the life blood is conveyed from the heart to the extremities of the body. Sever this, and she dies.

The consequence of this agitation was the establishment of the so-called denominational system. Due justice was at length meted to all. State support was rendered in proportion to census returns. This perfectly satisfied the stronger bodies of Christians, but did not meet the case of those who were Nonconformists, or who objected to any religious teaching being paid for by the State. Out of this dissatisfaction ultimately arose the national system of education, which was an adaptation of the Irish system. Both systems were acknowledged in New South Wales.

In Van Diemen's Land, under the liberal administration of the benevolent Sir John Franklin, a determination was reached to introduce the system favoured by Governor Gipps. The clergy were to be removed from the control of education, and the Bismarkian policy of State inspection was to be adopted.

This was in 1840. In 1841 the new system was inaugurated, teachers having been procured from England for the purpose. The success was unmistakeable, but the opposition remained. A resolute attack upon the system was made in 1842 upon the arrival of the newly-consecrated Bishop of Tasmania.

I was present on the occasion of his lordship's speech in council, and shall never forget the impetuosity of his onset, and the vehemence of his denunciations. He, doubtless, spoke what he believed; but his auditors fairly shuddered when he declared that, rather than see a child of his trained under so fatal a system, he would prefer to see him dead at his feet.

The Model School at Hobart Town at that time was conducted after the Borough-road School plans. The bishop was asked to come and examine the school himself, especially in Biblical lessons. The challenge was not accepted. He relied in good faith upon the report of a clergyman who had visited the schools, and whose assertions were disproved upon evidence by published statements of the Board of Education.

The end of the contest was the triumph of the denominationalists once more. The State was worried out, and consented to the *penny-a-day* system, so far supplementing the efforts of any establishing schools.

In another letter, if permitted, I will continue the story.

AUSTRALIAN.

Mr. Bright on Republicanism.—A person in Birmingham having been told by a member of the Republican Club that the republicans, if they gain power, would select Mr. Bright as their first president, wrote to the right hon. gentleman on the subject. Mr. Bright has written back:—"Your republican friend must not be a very desperate character if he proposes to make me his first president, though I doubt if he can be a friend of mine. As to opinions on the question of monarchy or republicanism, I hope and believe it will be a long time before we are asked to give an opinion. Our ancestors decided the matter a good while since, and I should leave any further discussion to our posterity. Now from your letter I conclude you are willing to do this, and I can assure you I am not less willing."

Imperial Parliament.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE NATIONAL EXPENDITURE.

When the House of Commons reassembled, after the Easter recess, the report of the resolutions of the Committee of Ways and Means having been brought up, Mr. Vernon Harcourt moved a resolution substantially the same as one moved by Mr. Stansfeld ten years ago:—

That in the opinion of this House the national expenditure is capable of further reduction without danger to the safety and good government of the country, and that it is desirable that such expenditure should be reduced accordingly, in order that the taxation of the people and the public debt may be diminished in a larger measure than is proposed in the said resolutions.

He justified the course he was taking by referring to the expenditure of the present year, which he stated was much larger than had ever been incurred even in a time of war, and to the utter disregard of economy displayed by a Householders' Parliament and a Liberal Government. He protested against the favourite method of accounting for increased estimates by the "fatalistic law of necessarily progressive expenditure," and, minutely reviewing the financial history of the country since 1852, showed that the estimates have frequently been diminished. After illustrating his argument by numerous quotations from Mr. Gladstone's speeches in condemnation of extravagant estimates, he reproached the Government for the breach of all its pledges in this respect, and also blamed the House for lack of vigilance, and for sanctioning a policy which had led to augmented expenditure. In reply to Mr. Lowe's plea that the estimates are not larger than in Lord Palmerston's time, Mr. Harcourt repudiated the Palmerstonian conception of economy, and asked to what good was the present Government formed on the basis of economy if that was to be the standard applied. He asked why the Government could not return to the expenditure of 1852. If they were to do so, the tea and sugar duties might be remitted, and a further twopence might be taken off the income-tax.

Mr. Henry Richard, in seconding the amendment, said he did not blame the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the character of the estimates, but regretted that he had gone out of his way to volunteer a defence of the enormous expenditure proposed for the army. What was the cause of the increased armament? No doubt all departments of the State had become more costly,—the civil service estimates having in a special manner increased, owing to the determination of the Government to do all sorts of things for the people which in former times they were accustomed to do for themselves. (Hear, hear.) But in the War Department the increased expenditure had been very serious. In 1835 the total number of our forces at home and abroad was 145,846 men. At present there was some difficulty in arriving at the number of men, because of the variation in the mode of stating it. If it was necessary to minister to the national pride, the number of available forces was made as large as possible; if it was necessary to minister to the national fear, the number was made as small as possible. But as far as he could make out, the latest returns there were at the present time half a million of men under arms in one form or another. Were we more secure now than in 1835? On the contrary, it appeared to him that just in proportion as the armaments were increased was the decrease in the feeling of security from foreign invasion. To show how greatly the military expenditure had increased in recent years he would quote from the returns moved for by the Prime Minister. They showed that from the year 1817 to the year 1826 the total expenditure of the War Department was 171 millions, or 29 per cent. of the total expenditure; from 1827 to 1836 it was 141 millions, or 26 per cent. of the total expenditure; from 1837 to 1846 it was 145 millions, or 27 per cent. of the total expenditure; from 1847 to 1856 it was 214 millions, or 35 per cent. of the total expenditure; and from 1857 to 1866 it was 272 millions, or 39 per cent. of the total expenditure of the country. Why was it that we had this enormous increase in the military expenditure? The Minister of War, in bringing forward his estimates, had urged that it was with the view to prevent the recurrence of those panics which had so frequently dishonoured the nation. If the right hon. gentleman believed his own assertion, and he supposed he did, he must be of a most sanguine temperament. In 1852, in consequence of certain changes in the Governmennt of France, a violent panic went through the country. There was a cry for the militia, and the militia were called out with the assurance that if they were embodied England need fear nothing from the invader. Very few years elapsed before the panic returned again, and the militia were held to be useless by those who had clamoured for them. Next there was a cry for the volunteers, but again, after a brief interval, the panic returned. The volunteers were stigmatised as a "sham army," and an extensive system of fortifications was tried. At the time Mr. Cobden was negotiating the Treaty of Commerce with France a vote of eleven millions was moved in order to increase our fortifications, and in the year 1869, nearly half of that sum having then been spent, the *Times* published an article in which it declared that we might just as well have thrown the five millions into the sea. The cry for more protection was, the *Times* said, as loud after all that had been done. It was in 1859 as it had been in 1849, and in 1869 we were described as being in the same defenceless position as we had been ten

years previously. Since the Peace of 1816 we had spent some thousand million pounds upon our armaments, and yet upon the outbreak of the war between France and Prussia gallant gentlemen, who, though brave in battle, were in times of peace in a chronic state of alarm, told the House that the country was absolutely defenceless. The right hon. gentleman the Minister of War, yielding to the panic, had asked for greatly increased supplies, and had supported his action by stating that it was necessary to have large armaments on account of the great military monarchies springing up in Europe. Did the right hon. gentleman mean that we were to enter into the rivalry of armament by which those nations were rushing to their ruin? If that were so, he ventured to answer him by the often-quoted words of Sir Robert Peel, when a somewhat similar argument was used in the House. Sir Robert Peel said, "We must, indeed, consider what is going on upon the continent, but we should consider it rather as a warning than as an example." In referring to this subject, the right hon. gentleman the member for Buckinghamshire had said that our expenditure must depend upon our policy. The question, therefore, was what was to be our future foreign policy. We had tried three different kinds of foreign policy. The first had been that of constant armed intervention in European quarrels, which, as declared by Fox in 1792, had resulted in a lavish and unprofitable waste of our blood and treasure. Then we had tried the policy of what was called diplomatic intervention for a period of about thirty or forty years, during which we had quarrelled with every Power in Europe and America, and had reached the verge of war with France and the United States again and again. From those who cast a lingering look behind upon that policy, which they appeared to think necessary to maintain the honour of the country, he differed *toto cœlo*, inasmuch as it had resulted in this nation having been compelled to eat humble pie on more than one occasion, and had led to our ambassadors being twice dismissed from foreign countries, and the French ambassadors withdrawn from our Court. At the present time another policy was unreservedly adopted by the leaders of all parties in this country—that of non-intervention, which, in his opinion was the wisest that could be pursued. It had been suggested that this was a new-fangled policy, but the truth was that it was the ancient policy of this realm. In 1830, when the Liberal party came into office, Earl Grey said that our true policy was to maintain universal peace, and to abstain from interfering in foreign disputes. He was delighted to find that the leaders of the opposite party had frankly and loyally accepted the principle of non-intervention to its fullest extent. After quoting the opinions of the present Lord Derby and of Mr. Hardy on the subject, he asked why, if we were determined for the future to mind our own business, should we continue to keep up our present enormous armaments, which could have no other object than to enable us again to interfere in the affairs of Europe? As one of the friends of the Ministry, he trusted that the Prime Minister would say something to-night that would give ground for hope that, while the dignity and safety of the country were duly cared for, our present large expenditure would be reduced, so as to entitle the Government to be called an economical Ministry, and to relieve the people of a burden of taxation of which they had a right to complain. (Hear, hear.)

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK said it seemed to him that the present Budget was rather calculated to please the House of Commons than to benefit the country. He was most anxious for economy, but it was in order that we might have ample funds for objects of real importance. They had heard a great deal during this discussion about the extreme poverty of the country. Poverty, however, depended more on a man's character than on his income or on the amount he paid in taxes. Yet, to hear some hon. members speak, any one would suppose that we were a nation of paupers, and that the great object of human existence, the highest aspiration of an enlightened people, was to drink the largest possible quantity of cheap tea. From 1856 to 1870 taxes were repealed amounting to more than 44,900,000*l.*, and deducting those imposed, 12,600,000*l.*, there had been a reduction of taxation amounting to no less than 32,300,000*l.* He regretted that Mr. Lowe had not seized the opportunity his large surplus offered to effect a considerable reduction in the National Debt. Mr. R. FOWLER thought that, under the circumstances, this would have been a most unpopular step, but he urged Mr. Lowe to consider the matter next year. Mr. RYLANDS, in reference to the resolution, lamented the sad fate of the economists, who did not know to which side to turn for a leader, and contended that Mr. Gladstone might have reduced the estimates by ten millions.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER assured Sir J. Lubbock that though he sympathised with his views on the reduction of the debt, he felt himself unable, under existing circumstances, to carry them out. As to the resolution, he urged that economy was not a matter to be dealt with abstractedly, but in detail—not by "large statesmanlike talk about millions," but by careful supervision of the spending of hundreds and thousands. He confessed that he did not possess the superhuman virtues attributed to Sir R. Peel; and though he was one of the best-abused men in the country, it was not for extravagance but for economy. In the same way the Government was blamed, not for a spirited foreign policy, but for a servile policy; and, in reality, they differed from Mr. Harcourt only in wishing to secure peace by convincing the world of our invulnerability. He maintained that the additions to the estimates were due not merely to increased expenditure, but were caused by reforms and reorganisations which must ultimately lead to economy, and the question was not whether we spent more or less than according to some obsolete standard, but whether we spent as little as we could consistently with the safety and honour of the country and the wants of the community. He allowed that reductions in the estimates were possible, but they must be the work of the House more than of the Government, and he asked Mr. Harcourt and his followers to assist the Government in resisting the pressure perpetually put on them to spend public money in various ways.

After some remarks from Mr. J. Fielden, Mr. J. B. Smith, and Mr. Lawrence, the resolution was negatived, on a division, by 78 to 33 votes. The Budget resolutions were then agreed to.

THE ROYAL PARKS.

In committee on the Royal Parks and Gardens Bill on the same evening, and in a discussion of the eighth regulation of the first schedule, which declares that no public address shall be delivered in the parks except under the rules of the parks, Mr. AYRTON gave an outline of what these rules are intended to be. Mr. MILLER, who was supported by Mr. RYLANDS and Mr. HARCOURT, moved its omission; and Mr. AYRTON, in opposing this, denied it was ever intended to prohibit public meetings in the park, on the contrary, the bill put public meetings on the same footing as riding in carriages, walking on the grass, bathing, &c. He proposed that meetings for lawful purposes should be permitted in Hyde Park, Victoria Park, Battersea Park, Regent's Park, and Hollywood Park, within certain defined spaces. It was not intended to interfere with the topics to be discussed at those meetings, and at present he had not come to any conclusion as to permitting Sunday meetings. Mr. HARCOURT and Mr. M'LAREN considered the concession satisfactory, the former remarking that much discussion would have been saved if this statement had been made two months ago. A general disposition was shown to allow the schedules to pass, and to adjourn further discussion until the report; but Mr. A. HERBERT's "sense of duty would not permit him" to acquiesce in this course, and he insisted on dividing the committee on Mr. MILLER'S amendment. When, however, the doors had been closed, and the committee cleared for a division, he was unable to find a teller. The amendment was thereupon negatived, and the other schedules were agreed to.

PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.

Late on Friday night, some seventeen members being present, Mr. STANSFELD moved the second reading of this bill. Dr. PLAYFAIR supported the general principles of the bill, and offered some suggestions for the improvement of its details, especially insisting on the desirability of enlarging the areas and raising the qualifications for the health officers. Sir H. SELWIN-IBBETSON generally supported the bill, but objected to the local authorities proposed for the rural districts. The discussion was continued by Mr. WHITWELL, who deprecated striving after too high a standard in regard to the pollution of rivers, and by Mr. DISRAELI, who criticised the measure under three heads—the improvement of labourers' cottages, the pollution of rivers, and the rural boards. After Mr. Muntz, Dr. Lush, and Mr. Corrance had addressed the House, Sir C. B. ADDERLEY remarked that to create new bodies would have consumed time, while the subject would not wait; and that by taking advantage of these bodies and their staffs there would be a considerable saving. He reiterated his regret that consolidation had been postponed, but praised the Government bill, which he said would give vitality to our present system, and would not cost the ratepayers a shilling that was not remunerative. Sir T. Acland, Mr. G. Hardy, and Mr. W. H. Smith, concurred in the principle of the measure. In reply, Mr. Stansfeld explained his reasons for choosing the union as an area and the guardians as the local authority, and defended the clauses of the bill relating to the pollution of rivers. With regard to the medical officers, he said it was his intention that the Act should be started with a competent staff, and he meant to propose a vote to Parliament for the purpose. As to the suggestion for a digest of sanitary law, he announced that he had one already in hand. Mr. Stansfeld's bill was then read a second time.

The second reading of Sir C. B. Adderley's Public Health and Local Government Bill was also agreed to.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

On Monday the first order of the day was the Committee of Ways and Means, and when this was read, Mr. DODSON rose from the bench immediately behind that occupied by the members of the Government, and in appropriate and well-balanced sentences announced his intention to resign the office of Chairman of Committees, which he has held for three successive Parliaments, and for a space of between seven and eight years. The cheers came equally from each side of the House as the hon. gentleman went on to thank members for the indulgence and forbearance which they had extended towards him; to express his especial gratitude to those who had assisted him in the conduct of the private business, and to acknowledge the help which he had received from the officers of the House. Not less was the general assent with which the House listened to Mr. GLADSTONE'S statement that the retiring Chairman of Committees had proved equal to the discharge of all his duties; and to his reference to Mr. Dodson's quick discernment, indefatigable industry, and strict impartiality. The last-named quality was fully acknowledged by Mr. DISRAELI on the part of the Conservatives; and the member for Bucks, while regretting his retirement, further credited the member for East Sussex (amidst universal accord) with adequate learning, and a courtesy which never failed. When the Speaker left his seat, Mr. GLADSTONE moved that Mr. Bonham-Carter should take the chair; and after an interjection by Mr. OSBORNE, "For this night or for ever?" the member for Winchester took his seat at the table, and immediately reported progress—this simple proceeding amounting to his appointment as Chairman of Committees.

THE BALLOT BILL.

The House then went into committee on the Ballot Bill. Clause 2, which prescribes the manner in which the poll shall be taken, was commenced; and on the first line of it more than two hours was occupied in discussing a variety of suggestions for extending the hours of polling. Sir C. DILKE moved the insertion of words fixing the hours from eight a.m. to eight p.m., and Mr. FORSTER, on the part of the Government, declined to accept the amendment, on the ground that to carry on the polling after dark would favour personation and disturbance. Mr. TORRENS retorted that it was inconsistent in the Government to apprehend darkness, because the ballot itself was secret, and the proposal was supported by Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Dixon, Mr. Goldsmid, Mr. C. Bentinck, and Mr. T. Hughes, and opposed by Mr. Hardy, Mr. Powell, Mr. Hope, Mr. Kay-Shuttleworth, and others. Sir J. ELPHINSTONE was of opinion that to open the poll at six a.m. would be more convenient for the working men, and moved an amendment to that effect. Mr. WHITBREAD suggested that sunset should be the limit of the polling hours, and Mr. FORSTER, after some consideration, accepted this, and promised on the report to bring up words carrying out the idea that the poll shall close as nearly as possible at sunset, but never before four or later than eight p.m. Sir JAMES ELPHINSTONE and Lord ELCHO pointed out the discrepancies which would follow from the different geographical position of different constituencies, and strong objections to the "sliding scale" were urged by other members. After a long conversation, in which very discordant opinions were expressed, three divisions were taken. In the first place, Sir J. Elphinstone's motion to begin at six a.m. was negatived by 242 to 66. Mr. COLLINS then proposed that the poll shall close at five p.m., and on a division, the hour of eight p.m., proposed by Sir C. DILKE, was struck out of his amendment by 206 to 98, but the committee refused by 157 to 93 to fill up the blank with five p.m. Mr. MORE then proposed six p.m., but ultimately Sir CHARLES DILKE relinquished altogether his attempt to extend the hours, and left the question in the hands of the Government to move a sliding scale on the report. Mr. HORSMAN wound up the conversation by expressing a hope that when Mr. Forster had made up his mind to another proposal he would stand by it.

After this Mr. J. LOWTHER again submitted to the committee an elaborate scheme for taking the poll by voting papers, which Mr. FORSTER again met by the objection that it would defeat the intention of the bill, and that the House, having passed the second reading, would stultify itself by accepting this scheme. On a division the amendment was negatived by 81 to 36.

Mr. C. BENTINCK then moved the first of a series of amendments designed to alter the form of the ballot, so as to make it a more open ballot, which, after a short discussion, was rejected by 143 to 99; and a second amendment of the same series was negatived by 199 to 104.

Lord MAHON then renewed the proposal to provide for a scrutiny by requiring that each ballot paper shall bear a number corresponding to the number on the counterfoil from which it is torn. He gave way, however, in favour of Mr. GREGORY, who proposed to obtain the same end by requiring the returning officer to inscribe on the ballot paper the voter's number on the register. This was debated for some time, the arguments in favour of a scrutiny, and to the impossibility of preventing personation without it, being urged by Colonel Barttelot, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Crors, and Mr. Collins. Mr. M'CULLAGH TORRENS also spoke on the same side from the Liberal benches, protesting against the notion that Parliament should legislate for the craven minority, and appealing to the authority of Mr. Bright. On the other hand, the SOLICITOR-GENERAL and Mr. FORSTER argued that the absolute secrecy which is the essence of the bill was inconsistent with a scrutiny, and that ample securities were taken in other ways for the prevention of personation. On a division Mr. Gregory's amendment was negatived by 166 to 126. The further progress of the bill was then adjourned until Thursday.

MISCELLANEOUS.

On Thursday Mr. LOWE stated that the reduction of the coffee-duties will not take effect until the 1st of May.

On the same day the Court of Chancery Funds Bill, which transfers the control of the moneys of Chancery suitors from the Accountant-General to the Paymaster-General, allowing suitors two per cent. interest on the sums invested, was, after a long discussion, read a second time by 89 to 37.

On Friday Mr. GLADSTONE said, in reply to a question from Mr. Newdegate, that the recent visit paid by the Prince of Wales to the Pope was not official, but was the result of the ordinary feelings of

courtesy and respect manifested by foreigners of distinction towards the latter when visiting the city of Rome.

On the same evening Mr. BOUVERIE called attention to the accident to the boats of the Ariadne, and maintained that it was due to the culpable negligence of the Admiralty. He moved a resolution that it was and is the duty of the Admiralty to provide Her Majesty's ships at sea with efficient apparatus for lowering their boats in safety. The motion having been seconded by Mr. GRAVES, Mr. GOSCHEN admitted that it was the duty of the Admiralty to see that Her Majesty's ships were furnished with every means of saving life, and pledged himself that if the motion were withdrawn the regulations should be re-examined, and that a departmental committee, aided by professional authorities from without, should inquire into the relative merits of different lowering apparatus. After a debate, in which the mismanagement of the Admiralty was severely condemned, the motion was withdrawn.

In reply to Mr. Chas. Reed, Mr. FORSTER (Vice-President of the Council) stated that the office of inspector of singing in training colleges and schools had been conferred on Mr. Hullah, who had received the appointment in the full belief that he would make a perfectly fair examination as to the kind of instruction bestowed on the pupils.

In Committee of Supply, on Friday, Mr. RYLANDS moved that the vote for the Foreign Office should be reduced by £500—the sum allowed to the Permanent Under-Secretary for managing the Secret Service Fund—but was defeated by a majority of 41.

On Monday the ATTORNEY-GENERAL replied to a question of Mr. Neville-Grenville, by saying it was true that six counsel had been retained for the Tichborne trial; not on account of any difficulty in the facts, but because of the immense amount of documentary evidence that had to be gone into.

Mr. FORSTER said, in reply to Mr. Dixon, that he would lay on the table that evening four schemes under the Endowed Schools Act, and he hoped to lay others upon the table before the end of the session.

To the question of Lord R. GOWER whether it is intended to supplement the pension granted to Lady Mayo by the Indian Government from the Imperial Exchequer, Mr. LOWE gave no more definite answer than that when Mr. Osborne's motion comes before the House he will state the views of the Cabinet upon the subject.

In answer to Sir J. TRELAWNY, who indulged in some severe reflections on the Government for abdicating its responsibility in the matter, Mr. BRUCE promised that ample notice should be given of the second reading of the Bill repealing the Contagious Diseases Act, in order that Sir J. Trelawny might have ample opportunity of moving his contemplated "call of the House."

The select committee on the Game Laws was nominated, and enlarged from nineteen to twenty-one, and the Marine Mutiny Bill was read a second time, and the Mutiny Bill a third time and passed.

MR. DISRAELI AND LORD DERBY AT MANCHESTER.

On Thursday the right hon. Benjamin Disraeli delivered his long-expected speech in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, which was crammed with some 6,000 people. He was received with hearty enthusiasm. Mr. Callender occupied the chair, and Lady Beaconsfield and a number of peers and persons of influence were present.

Mr. DISRAELI stated, in beginning his remarks, that he had received the previous day upwards of two hundred addresses, and he could not after that feel any doubt as to the propriety of his appearing and making some acknowledgment of the honour conferred upon him. He defined the programme of the Conservative party to be the maintenance of the Constitution of the country, and then, disclaiming any intention to deliver an essay on the Constitution, proceeded to expatiate on the advantages secured to Englishmen by its existence. Remarking that since the settlement of that Constitution, now nearly two centuries ago, England has never experienced a revolution, though there is no country in which there has been so continuous and such considerable change, he accounted for the fact by reference to the wisdom of our forefathers, which placed the prize of supreme power without the sphere of human passions. It was a fallacious view to imagine that the influence of the Crown was altogether absorbed in the responsibility of the Minister. A Sovereign called to the throne like George III., for instance, in early life, and reigning many years, must acquire an amount of information and experience the disregard of which by his chief adviser would prove that adviser not a Constitutional Minister, but an arrogant idiot. He proceeded to argue that there is no sovereignty of any first-rate State which costs so little to the people as the sovereignty of England. The Sovereign of the United States was not the President, but the people; and he would show what the sovereignty of the United States costs. Reckoning the salaries of members of Congress and of the State Legislatures, and the mileage allowances, he found that the immediate expenditure for the sovereignty of the United States is between 700,000*l.* and 800,000*l.* a year. Mr. Disraeli spoke next of the House of Lords, maintaining that all experience had shown representative-government to be impossible without a second chamber, but next to the value of such a chamber was the difficulty of creating it. What (he asked) is the first quality which is required in a second chamber? Without doubt, independence. What is the best foundation of independence? Without doubt, property.

The Prime Minister of England has only recently told you, and I believe he spoke quite accurately, that the average income of the members of the House of Lords is 20,000*l.* per annum. Of course there are some who have more and some who have less; but the influence of a public assembly, so far as property is concerned, depends upon its aggregate property, which, in the present case, is a revenue of 9,000,000*l.* a year. But you must look to the nature of this property. It is visible property, and therefore it is responsible property, which every ratepayer in the room knows to his cost. But it is not only visible property; it is, generally speaking, territorial property; and one of the elements of territorial property is that it is representative.

With a passing reference to life peers as not so well fitted to discharge the duties appertaining to members of the second chamber as hereditary members, Mr. Disraeli proceeded to speak of the House of Commons. Lord Grey's Reform Bill, which was a statesmanlike measure, provided for the security of aristocratic influence and the rights of the middle classes, but not only did it leave out the poor, but it actually deprived them of their ancient franchises. That was the origin of Chartism and of that electoral uneasiness which existed in this country more or less for thirty years. The Liberal party had not acted fairly by this question. In their adversity they held out hopes to the working classes, but when they had a strong Government, they laughed their vows to scorn. What, however (Mr. Disraeli asked), had been the result of Lord Derby's Reform Bill?

In 1848 there was a French Revolution and a Republic was established. No one can have forgotten what the effect was in this country. I remember the day when not a woman could leave her house in London, and when cannon were planted on Westminster Bridge. A year ago there was another revolution in France, and a Republic was again established of the most menacing character. What happened in this country? You could not get half a dozen men to assemble in a street and grumble. Why? Because the people had got what they wanted. They were content and they were grateful.

Mr. Disraeli's next topic was the education question and the connection of Church and State, on which subject we have quoted his remarks in a separate column. He went on to speak in congratulatory terms on the progress made by the working classes during the last forty years. They had for centuries been in the full enjoyment of that which no other country in Europe had ever completely attained—personal freedom. In the second place, there had been a gradual, and therefore a wise, distribution on a large scale of political rights. The working classes had attained, in the period mentioned, two results—the raising of their wages and the diminution of their toil. Increased means and increased leisure were the two civilisers of man. The agricultural labourers had shares in the general improvement, and with respect to the new movement among that class, Mr. Disraeli said while he fully admitted their right of combining as they were doing, he must express his belief that the farmers could not afford to pay higher wages. The farmer will have his profits and the investor in land will have his interest, even though they may be obtained at the cost of changing the mode of the cultivation of the country, and for himself he should deeply regret to see the tillage of this country reduced, and a recurrence to pasture. The right hon. gentleman attributed the improvement which he insisted had taken place in the labourer's condition to three causes. In the first place, the rise in their money wage is no less than 15 per cent. The second great cause of their improvement was the almost total disappearance of excessive and exhausting toil, from the general introduction of machinery. I don't know (said Mr. Disraeli) whether I could get a couple of men who could, or, if they could, would, thresh a load of wheat in my neighbourhood. The third great cause which has improved their condition is the very general, not to say universal, institution of allotment grounds. The right hon. gentleman concluded this portion of his address by insisting on the necessity of sanitary reform. Coming next to contemporary politics, Mr. Disraeli inquired how it was that at a period of immense prosperity, with a people contented and naturally loyal, we found the most extravagant doctrines professed and the fundamental principles of our most valuable institutions impugned, and that too by persons of some authority. He accounted for this startling inconsistency by the circumstances under which the present administration was formed. It was the first instance in his knowledge of a British administration being avowedly formed on a principle of violence. The policy of the Ministry when they came into office was, with regard to Ireland, to despoil churches and plunder landlords; and, not satiated with the spoliation and anarchy of Ireland, they began to attack every institution and every interest, every class and calling in the country. He recalled what they had done with the army; how the old and constitutional jealousy towards a powerful standing army had been cast aside; how the local connections of the militia had been dissolved; and all this amid the acclamations of the Liberal party. Nor was it otherwise with the navy. "It is only a few weeks since that in the House of Commons I heard the naval statement made by a new First Lord, and it consisted only of the rescinding of all the revolutionary changes of his predecessor, every one of which during the last two years has been pressed upon the attention of Parliament and the country by that constitutional and necessary body the Opposition." On foreign politics Mr. Disraeli contended that the Crimean war would never have happened if Lord Derby had been in office, and that on the Alabama question our Government had made it impossible for the American Government to recede from their position, even if they had believed it to be an erroneous one. The policy had been a combination of negligence and blundering, and he believed that their incompetence would be sealed by our ultimately acknowledging these indirect claims of the United States, which, both as regards principle and practical results, were fraught with the utmost danger to this country.

Lord DERBY followed Mr. Disraeli in a short speech, in the course of which he spoke of the loyalty of his right hon. friend alike to the claims of private friendship and of party connection. He went on to urge Conservatives not to be cast down because they were outnumbered in the House of Commons, and expressed a strong hope that they would not allow themselves to be made the tools of the Radicals. We have (he said) two duties to perform. One is to oppose the Minister when he is wrong, and I am bound to say we have not had a sinecure in that respect; the other is to support the Minister when he is right, and there are occasions on which that duty may be as important and necessary as the former. The noble earl thus concluded:—

At a time like this the responsibilities, not only of the Government but of the Opposition, are serious, and I can consider no greater fault for a public man to commit next to that of which I don't we shall be found guilty, namely, reckless and factious intrigue. I conceive no graver faults next to that than for any public man to say, "I am in a minority; I cannot make my own ideas prevail; therefore, I will leave polities alone and let the public take care of itself." Gentlemen, the world is governed by energetic minorities, and if I may say so, I think it is especially our weakness on the Conservative side to underrate our own strength, and to overrate that of our opponents. We hear the popular cries of the day raised; we think them formidable. We do not reflect how very few people can make a great noise if they set about it in earnest. We think only of the few hundreds or thousands at most who are clamorous and dissatisfied, and we forget the many millions who are silent and content. Well, gentlemen, there are rumours—everybody has heard them—that before any great length of time has passed we may again be engaged in the lively occupation of a general election. Whether these rumours are founded or unfounded I cannot pretend to judge or even conjecture; but of this I am sure, that the Conservative party in Lancashire need not fear a trial of its strength. Never were they more united; never have they been more powerful; and I hope and I believe that when the time and the occasion come they will do again that which they did three years ago, and set an example to the constituencies of England.

THE EDUCATION ACT.

LONDON SCHOOL BOARD.

FINSBURY ELECTION.—The election for this vacancy took place on Wednesday, when Mr. Hugh Owen was returned by a large majority over Mr. Stafford Allen. The result of the poll was as follows:—

Owen	4,693
Allen	3,407
Majority	1,286

The new member, Mr. Hugh Owen, is an advocate for Bible teaching in rate-aided and rate-supported schools. His opponent, Mr. Allen, is in favour of united secular and separate religious instruction, and desires to see the Education Act of 1870 so carried out that it may result in a truly national system. He was generally supported by the Dissenters and working men of Finsbury. Of upwards of 60,000 voters, only 8,108 polled at the ballot. Out of the nine wards in Islington, seven gave majorities for Mr. Owen, those giving majorities for Mr. Allen being Stoke Newington 296 as against 113, and Highbury 435 as against 426. The total number of votes polled in Islington was 5,479, of which 3,199 stood to Mr. Owen, and 2,280 to Mr. Allen. In Clerkenwell, one out of three wards gave Mr. Allen a majority, and the totals were, for Owen, 722; Allen, 438. In St. Luke's Mr. Owen gained 259 votes, as against 467 of his opponent. Mr. Stafford Allen having been described in several of the daily papers as "a secularist," writes in reply:—

I am, in common with the religious body to which I belong, the Society of Friends, a firm believer in the Divine authority and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, and read them daily to my family and servants. It is quite true that as one of the five delegates from London, I attended the recent Manchester Conference of Nonconformists, and adopted their platform, viz., moral and secular education by the State, but religious instruction by the pastors, churches, Sunday-school teachers, and others; but I am as far from being a secularist in religion as Mr. Gladstone, Dr. Temple, or the Earl of Shaftesbury.

GREENWICH.—Mr. James Soames has issued his address as a candidate for the vacant Greenwich seat on the London School Board. He announces himself as favourable to the payment of fees to denominational schools. Dr. Bennett and Mr. Henry Gover are also candidates.

WESTMINSTER.—On Thursday night Mr. George Potter, the working-man and Nonconformist candidate for the vacancy in the Westminster division

occasioned by the retirement of Lord Sandon, addressed a large meeting of ratepayers at Eccleston Chapel Schoolrooms, Pimlico. The Rev. I. H. Hitchens occupied the chair. Mr. Potter, in a long address, declared himself in favour of compulsory and secular education, throwing the responsibility of religious teaching upon the various religious bodies. He was opposed to the payment of fees for denominational education out of the rates. The meeting was afterwards addressed by the Rev. J. G. Rogers, the Rev. S. Booth, the Rev. G. Murphy, Mr. Daniel Pratt, and others, and resolutions were adopted pledging the meeting to support Mr. Potter. The nomination paper of Mr. Potter is signed by Dr. Brewer, M.P., as his proposer. The London Nonconformist Committee have issued a circular asking support for Mr. Potter as prepared to maintain religious equality in education, and to support the principle of combined secular and separate religious instruction. Mr. Potter's claims are also strongly urged by the Education League and the Labour Representation League. Amongst the members of his committee are—Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, M.P.; Sir Henry Hoare, M.P.; J. Hinde Palmer, M.P.; Watkin Williams, M.P.; Dr. W. Brewer, M.P.; G. O. Trevelyan, M.P.; Alex. Brogden, M.P.; A. W. Young, M.P.; John D. Lewis, M.P.; Andrew Johnson, M.P.; Charles Forster, M.P., Thomas Lea, M.P.; and he is recommended by several other members of the House of Commons, including Sir D. Wedderburn, Sir C. Wingfield, W. Vernon Harcourt, Charles Carnegie, George Dixon, J. J. Colman, Hugh Cholmeley, Captain T. H. Brinckman, James Howard, and E. Miall. Several meetings have been held in the borough in favour of Lord Mahon, the Church candidate. The election takes place on Friday, the 19th inst.

THE ROCHDALE TOWN COUNCIL AND THE SCHOOL-RATE.—On Thursday, at the Rochdale Town Council meeting, an exciting discussion arose on the minutes of the Finance Committee, which recommended the sanction of the council to a school-rate precept of 300*l*. Mr. Alderman Taylor, in proposing that the minutes be confirmed with the exception of the estimate of the school board for a rate of 300*l*., remarked that there was a great difference of opinion in the council as to the payment of fees for denominational purposes, and recommended the council not to undertake the collection of it. The Mayor (Mr. Shawcross) said taht if the council decided not to collect the money a *mandamus* would be obtained, and the council would be compelled to collect the money. The Town Clerk reminded the council that by law they could be compelled to collect the rate. Upon Mr. Alderman Taylor's amendment being put to the meeting, eleven were in its favour and eleven against it. The ex-Mayor (Mr. Alderman G. L. Ashworth), who at this time was occupying the chair, said he would give his casting vote in favour of Mr. Taylor's amendment. ("Hear, hear," and applause.) Shortly after, however, the ex-Mayor informed the council that an important point had been raised, as to whether he could give the casting vote when the Mayor was present. The Town Clerk decided that the ex-Mayor could not give the casting vote when the Mayor was present. The Mayor then took the chair, and gave his casting vote against Mr. Alderman Taylor's amendment. Mr. Schofield and Mr. Alderman Taylor protested against this decision. The ex-Mayor asked what position they would be in when persons refused to pay the rate. The Mayor replied, "We must meet that when it comes." (Hear, hear.)

REPEAL OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH CLAUSE.

The following form of petition in favour of the repeal of the 25th clause of the Education Act—which Mr. Candlish will shortly move in the House of Commons—is recommended by the Central Nonconformist Committee:—

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom in Parliament assembled.

The petition of the undersigned humbly sheweth:—

That in the opinion of your petitioners, the payment by school boards of the fees of children attending denominational schools, constitutes an unwise and unjust application of public money to schools under private and irresponsible management; and violates religious liberty by devoting a tax levied upon the whole community to the support of creeds of differing churches.

That your petitioners therefore pray your honourable House to pass a bill for the unconditional repeal of the 25th clause of the Elementary Act (1870), and the omission of the words from Clause 74 providing for the payment of the whole or any part of the fees of any child where the parent satisfies the school board that he is unable from poverty to pay the same.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

Note.—Petitions must be written, not printed. The signatures must begin on the same sheet as the petition. The other sheets must be attached by gum or paste to the sheets on which the petition and first signatures appear. Parliamentary petitions may be sent to members for presentation post free, and parcels open at both ends, marked, "Parliamentary petitions," and weighing not more than thirty-two ounces.

Where any difficulty is experienced in securing a written copy of the petition, one ready for signature may be obtained by applying to the Secretary, Central Nonconformist Committee, 86, New-street, Birmingham.

THE PREMIER ON THE EDUCATION ACT.

While Mr. Disraeli was visiting Manchester last week, Mr. Gladstone was on a visit to Lord Chesham, at Latimer, Bucks, only a few miles from Hughenden, and delivered an address to the Working Men's Club. Mr. Gladstone, after speaking approvingly of working men's clubs, referred to various measures which Parliament had passed with the view of bettering the position of the working man. Speaking of the great burden of Parliamentary labour which devolved upon those who were the people's representatives in the House of Commons, and especially those who had to take a leading part in the responsibilities of the Government, he said the mental and physical strain was very great indeed, and he could refer to some, and especially to one great man, who had broken down under it. Respecting the education question, the Premier said that of all measures that had come under the consideration of the House of Commons, this was the most comprehensive and complicated. Generally speaking, in other measures there was one simple principle embodied, which had only to be carried out, but in the Elementary Education Act there was an embodiment of several principles, which had to be grouped together and experimented on at the same time. It would be impossible that such a measure could be framed to the perfect satisfaction of all parties. After it had been in operation some time, and experience had been gained, some amendments or modifications might be required, and in such an event Mr. Gladstone said full consideration would be given to the different views on the subject, and he hoped in such a way as would make the measure as satisfactory as possible to all.

THE MEMBERS FOR WOLVERHAMPTON ON THE EDUCATION ACT.—The two members for this borough addressed their constituents on Wednesday last. In the course of his speech the Hon. C. P. Villiers expressed his conviction that Mr. Dixon had made out his case against the Education Act. The Legislature would have, sooner or later, to look in the face the question whether religion ought to be confounded with secular teaching. It had been asserted that there were some who did not care for religion, and who wished to exclude the Bible; but he had never heard an individual express such a wish, or any party affirm such a desire. What the Nonconformists maintained was that things should not be confounded that were quite distinct. It seemed to him that it was not for the interest of the child that he should be taught religion by the same person who taught secular subjects. A schoolmaster was not trained for the purpose of teaching religion, but a minister of religion was a man who understood the subject, and knew how to impress the child properly. To assert that the Nonconformists were indifferent to religion was a contradiction of facts. Even some of the dignitaries of the Established Church had advocated the separation of secular from the religious instruction, with a view to the better instruction of the children. Mr. Villiers concluded by saying that it could not be denied that there was a strong feeling that the course recommended by the Nonconformists would conduce to the success of the general scheme of education. Mr. Weguelin endorsed the views of Mr. Villiers, and said he certainly should have voted for Mr. Dixon's motion if he had been in the country, although there were perhaps one or two points on which he did not quite agree with him.

Epitome of News.

The Queen, with Prince Leopold and Princess Beatrice, left Baden on Saturday afternoon to return to England *vid* Cherbourg. Before her departure she gave 500 florins to the mayor for the poor of the town. Her Majesty and children reached Portsmouth on Sunday evening shortly after six, and passed the night on board, and on Monday afternoon reached Windsor. They travelled by special train on the Great Western Railway, and on their arrival drove immediately to the Castle. Her Majesty is stated to be in excellent health.

It is announced that the Queen will stay at Windsor for about six weeks, during which time Her Majesty will visit the metropolis several times, and will remain at Claremont for a day or two.

Her Majesty has graciously consented to open the East London Museum, which is now rapidly approaching completion, but the day has not yet been fixed. She will, it is said, take the opportunity of visiting Victoria Park on the same occasion.

The Prince and Princess of Wales have left Rome, after witnessing an illumination of the Coliseum and other public buildings, and have gone to Florence. Both are in excellent health.

It is understood that Prince Arthur, captain in the Rifle Brigade, at Dover, will shortly be promoted to the rank of major, and after a brief stay at his residence in Greenwich Park, will proceed to India for two years' service in that country.

The *Times* is authorised to state that the report published in some English and French journals, that the Emperor Napoleon has borrowed in London 15,000,000f., is entirely destitute of foundation.

The *Daily News* learns that there is some probability of Mr. Bright's resuming his seat in the House of Commons during the present or in the course of next week.

The Bank of England directors on Thursday advanced the official rate of discount to 3½ per cent.

Metropolitan pauperism, by the weekly returns, would appear to be on the decrease. The total number receiving relief during the past week was 118,275. Compared with the corresponding week in 1871, 1870, and 1869, these figures show a decrease of 24,096, 45,402, and 35,502 respectively. The whole number of vagrants relieved was 786.

A deputation from the Social Science, British Medical, and Medical Officers' Association, waited upon Mr. Stansfeld, president of the local Government Board, on Monday, to ask for certain amendments in the Public Health Bill. The chief point urged was that there should be one local authority instead of a division of authorities. Mr. Stansfeld could not affect to agree with the views propounded, as he adopted those of the Sanitary Commission.

The verdict in the Lambeth murder case acquits the prisoner on the ground of insanity, ordering him to be detained during Her Majesty's pleasure.

Hampstead, like Richmond, is manifesting opposition to the Government proposal of being made one of the depot centres under the new scheme of local military organisation. The Town Council of Leicester has also protested against that town being made a military centre.

At the last meeting of the Commissioners of Sewers it was reported that within the past fortnight 4,081lbs. of meat had been seized in the markets and slaughterhouses of the city as unfit for human food.

Christ's Hospital is at length to be removed into the country. The building, together with four acres of adjoining land, has been purchased by the Mid-London Railway Company for 600,000*l*.

At a crowded meeting held in Manchester on Monday, and presided over by the Mayor, resolutions were passed in favour of the speedy introduction by Government of a comprehensive measure of licensing reform, making permanent the Licensing Suspension Act, reducing the number of licensed houses, further restricting the hours, especially to the whole of Sunday, forbidding the sale of drink to children, withholding licences for liquor to music and dancing saloons, and providing generally more efficient police regulations. Unsuccessful attempts were made to obtain an adjournment of the meeting.

A motion for opening the Art Gallery and Library of Birmingham on Sundays was carried, amid cheers, in the Birmingham Town Council. The proposition was put forward on religious grounds, assuming that the moral and spiritual welfare of the people would be as much furthered by this method as their physical condition was by opening the parks. It was strongly opposed by those who contended that the proposal would have the effect of emptying churches and chapels, as well as public-houses.

At Fairyhouse races, near Dublin, a curious accident has occurred. Two gentlemen were galloping in opposite directions, when the heads of their horses struck full tilt together, and both horses were killed, the riders being thrown into the air. One of the gentlemen had his front teeth knocked out.

Three trades-unionists were on Saturday convicted before the Thames police-magistrate of having intimidated and assaulted one of their fellow-workmen. Each of them was sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour.

A brutal murder was committed in Dublin early on Monday morning. A woman named Kelly, residing in Vicar-street, Dublin, was attacked and beaten by her son, with whom she had been quarrelling. The ruffian inflicted some frightful injuries by blows with a stool, and kicked the poor woman when on the ground. She died from the injuries she received. The son is in custody.

A strange case of infatuation, resulting in self-mutilation, occurred at Truro on Friday evening. The wife of a tradesman of that town recently injured one of her hands, and was dissatisfied with its surgical treatment, which resulted in two fingers being bent over the palm. She frequently declared that she would rather be without the hand altogether than be thus crippled, and on Friday evening she placed her arm on the rails of the Cornwall line in front of an advancing train, which cleanly amputated her hand at the wrist. She then went in a cab to the Cornwall Infirmary. A previous attempt to get on the railway had been frustrated.

One of the sights of London, to country visitors especially, are the Gog and Magog clockwork figures at Sir John Bennett's watch establishment in Cheapside. An addition is now being made to them by the placing of a large figure of Apollo, cast by Brucciotti, on the summit of the house, which will strike each hour on a ton bell, while the figures below continue as at present to strike the Cambridge chimes on the quarter bells.

The following telegram may be read with interest by the friends of the fifty tourists travelling in Palestine under Mr. Cook's guidance:—"Magnificent termination of a perfect Palestine tour. All safe and well."

Mr. Thomas Walker, one of the principal missionaries of the London City Mission, died suddenly on Sunday morning, just after being brought home, at Clapham, from attending Divine service at church, where he had been taken ill.

At the sittings of the Co-operative Congress held at Bolton last week, it was resolved to recommend to the various stores the propriety of paying bonuses to their servants in proportion to their wages. Among other subjects discussed were those of co-operative industry, the best mode of employing surplus capital, and the wholesale method of co-operation. The delegates were largely in favour of the wholesale society enlarging its sphere of operation so as to be able to supply retail stores with the articles most in demand. A resolution was passed, authorising the Central Board to appoint a committee out of its own body to discuss the question of co-operative banking, with a view of bringing it to a speedy practical value.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"J. T. Waraker."—Toowoomba. One guinea received.

"A. B. M." seems to insist that we shall not only use the word "religious" in our own sense, which we have clearly defined, but that we shall justify the use made of it by every one else whom we may happen, on other grounds of approval, to quote. We are not equal to the task.

"R."—We are sorry we cannot print his able letter, but we quite agree with most Liberals, and the recent advice offered by Mr. John Bright as to the inexpediency of mooting the subject at the present time.

The Nonconformist.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 1872.

SUMMARY.

The Opposition leader's reception at Manchester last week did not fall below expectation, while his speech at the great Free Trade Hall meeting was, as we anticipated, neither a manifesto nor, primarily, a grand party assault. Mr. Disraeli was, however, himself on the occasion—the self-elected champion "of constitutional principles"; the sarcastic denouncer of "a policy of plunder and violence"; the composer of studied and bitter epigrams. He described the head of the Government as alternating between a menace and a sigh; encouraging by his speech, though not by vote, the Radicals below the gangway, and substituting extravagance for energy. His description of the origin of the Captain and Megæra calamities, and his references to the Crimean war and Alabama controversy, were an absurd and unfair travesty of contemporary history. The whole speech was an Easter pantomime, brilliant and lively enough as a rhetorical performance, but not well adapted to subserve even the interests of the right hon. gentleman as the head of the Conservative party. Mr. Disraeli committed himself to nothing but—sanitary reform and the preservation of the Constitution. Yet his gaping hearers were delighted at being befooled and tickled by polished invective and fanciful theories without substance. We are assured on high, indeed superfine authority, that Mr. Disraeli's visit to Manchester was a very great success. And the man who in a prominent public life of more than thirty years has never produced one single public measure of any importance, except the one which he stole from the pockets of the Radicals and spoiled, when he temporarily assumed their clothes, was last week the hero of the day!

Of far more real importance to the country was the comparatively brief but weighty speech of Lord Derby, who followed the Conservative leader. His lordship, while renewing, as it were, his vows of allegiance to Mr. Disraeli, deprecated any attempt to seize prematurely the reins of office. "It may very likely be the game of the Radical party," he said, "to try and turn out the present Ministry if they can, and to put a Conservative Government in its place, that Conservative Government being in a minority, hoping that by so doing they shall be able to reconstruct their own party upon a new platform, pledged to more extreme and more violent measures, and then to have a Cabinet formed of the most thorough-going Radicals." Lord Derby errs greatly in supposing that "the Radicals" aspire to office. Their motto is "measures not men," and their allegiance to the Government when in the right is a greater safeguard against a Ministerial change than the forbearing tactics of the Opposition. If, however, the leaders of the party do not aspire to power, why do they tacitly encourage the half-dozen members of the House of Commons whose unceasing obstruction prevents the passing of good legislative measures, and is bringing far more odium upon constitutional Government than the proposals of "Radical" politicians. It cannot be said that the Cabinet do not produce serviceable reforms, but they are thwarted not by the majority of the House, nor by the Opposition as such, but by a shameless abuse of the right of discussion by a few intolerants.

On the same evening that Mr. Disraeli was coming out anew on the Manchester stage, his chief political antagonist was making a modest little speech at Chesham, hard by Hughenden Manor, to a working men's club. Mr. Gladstone's topic was naturally education and the Act of 1870. It is satisfactory to note that the Premier does not follow the Marquis of Ripon in explaining away Mr. Forster's recent promises. That Act was, he says a piece of experimental legislation. "After it has been in operation some time, and experience has been gained," says Mr. Gladstone, "some amendments or modifications may be required, and in such an event full consideration will be given to the different views on the subject in such a way as will make the measure as satisfactory as possible to all." In his plain, unadorned, but sincere fashion, Mr. Stansfeld was at the same time defending the Government before his Halifax constituents, and assuring his hearers that he preferred a system of secular education to the present denominational plan, and that in his view disestablishment was only a question of time, and that when the day should come "the result would be to reinvigorate the religion of the country." Our Tory contemporaries are of course shocked to find a Cabinet Minister speaking in this strain.

On Thursday the House of Commons, on reassembling after the Easter recess, plunged, at the instance of Mr. Vernon Harcourt, into a discussion on national expenditure. His resolution in favour of retrenchment provoked a long debate, in the course of which Mr. Richard stated some telling facts, which had a circulative force, as to the prodigious growth of our military expenditure. Here is the true field for economy; but unhappily the policy of Parliament—or of the services which are predominant in both Houses—even more than that of the Government, dictates great armaments. But in respect to the increasing estimates for other objects the public is greatly to blame. They have grown because people will be more governed than they were, and every year there is a cry for increasing government. In every department people want control and inspection. Smoke is to be put down by law; factories are to be inspected by law; people are to be educated by law, and made healthy by law. This may all be bad or all be good, but if we have it, we must expect to pay for it. And here is one of the chief difficulties of Mr. Vernon Harcourt and his economical allies.

Since the Commons met after the holidays legislative business has made some progress. Mr. Stansfeld has got his Public Health Bill—another source of public expense—read a second time, and judicious Ministerial concessions have insured the passing of the Parks Bill. By the new rules laid before Parliament public meetings in some of the parks are distinctly authorised, but they will be subject to regulations, not as to freedom of speech, but in respect to time and place. The bill has gone through committee with only one protesting "No," and will no more block the way. On Monday—Mr. Bonham Carter having been appointed Chairman of Committees in place of Mr. Dodson, whose anxious devotion to his duties was greatly eulogised—the Ballot Bill was again taken up in committee at the second clause. A keen discussion on the hours of polling finally resulted in Mr. Forster's promise to embody the suggestion that the period should be from eight a.m. to "sunset"—a vague designation which will be a fruitful topic for further discussion. The voting-paper nostrum of Mr. Lowther and Colonel Beresford's plan to make the ballot permissive, were soon disposed of; but an amendment by Mr. Gregory, which would in effect prevent the absolute secresy of the ballot which the bill provides, was rejected by a majority of only 40. The Conservative cheers which followed probably meant that the Lords will by-and-by take full advantage of the reduction, in this particular case, of the Government majority. Clause 2 is as yet very far from being passed.

President Thiers, to the scandal of the "rurals," has been making a short stay in Paris, and holding a grand reception at the Elysée. He makes no secret of his desire to be a great deal among his "constituents, friends, and fellow-citizens" in the capital during the present recess, but the Permanent Commission do not approve of such intentions. In a few days the Assembly will meet again to discuss anew the proposed tax on raw materials, against which the manufacturing districts of France are renewing their protests. Meanwhile the treaty of commerce with Belgium has been denounced by the French Government.

To foreigners the Imperial Speech, read by Prince Bismarck at the opening of another session of the German Parliament, is almost without interest. Owing to successful war and flourishing trade, there is a surplus to be disposed of, and considerable fiscal reforms are promised. His Majesty speaks hopefully of Alsace and Lorraine, though other accounts indicate that the French population are not a whit reconciled to annexation to Germany, or likely to make use of the University, which is to be endowed, and will shortly be opened at Strasbourg. Englishmen, at all events, may share the hope of the Emperor that the power acquired by Germany, through becoming united in one Empire, will be not only a safe bulwark for the Fatherland, but likewise afford a strong guarantee for the peace of Europe. The speech makes no reference to the Ultramontane quarrel, though some project of legislation on the subject will probably be submitted to the German Parliament.

There is nothing new on the Alabama difficulty—a report that our Government has received a telegram from Washington holding out the prospect of a speedy arrangement having been contradicted. President Grant's Cabinet is leisurely considering Lord Granville's last note. A Washington Government organ, the *Evening Post*, expresses the opinion that

England's magnanimous action and "ample apology" might reasonably be accepted as full redress for injuries received. The indirect claims were "only advanced as an argument for awarding a gross sum in the shape of damages." The *Evening Post* regards this form of settlement as feasible and desirable, and declares that "the true policy of America is the closest alliance and friendship with Great Britain." Apparently, if such language has any meaning, an approximation is not very far distant; and it would seem that the American lawyers are quite content that the Geneva court should decline to consider the claim for consequential damages, and let it be forgotten. But they hanker after "a lump sum"—in fear perhaps that the ultimate award of the arbitrators might rather disappoint public expectation in America.

LORD SALISBURY ON EDUCATION.

The speech of the Marquis of Salisbury at Liverpool is an epitome of all the misunderstandings and misrepresentations which the education controversy has produced. We do not, of course, look to his lordship for anything but the most outspoken statement of the views of his own side in any political dispute. His vigorous but narrow intellect was made for party, and never meant for mankind. He cannot even see that there are two sides to a question. He can neither appreciate the position, nor understand the motives of opponents. It is impossible for him to be generous; it is even difficult to him to be just. His speeches rarely contain arguments; they are full of strong unqualified statements, and often irritate but never convince. Instead of looking for anything like the settlement of a controversy from Lord Salisbury, we look rather for its exasperation. He is not a statesman, but a partisan, and is more a polemic than a politician. His Liverpool speech was not intended as a settlement of the existing educational controversy; it was in no sense a contribution towards such settlement; it was, on the contrary, a call to arms.

From Lord Salisbury's point of view the National Society has become the representative and organ of the system of denominational national education. The controversy is thus narrowing; the real issue is coming to the front. As stated by Lord Salisbury, it is a question between freedom for the priesthood and freedom for the people. "The National Society," says Lord Salisbury, "is the champion of full freedom of religious teaching, of the freedom of the teacher to teach what he believes, and of the freedom of the parent to send his child to that school where what he believes is taught." This is the formula in which the denominationalists are everywhere stating their claims. It has taken Mr. Forster captive, and imposed even on Mr. Gladstone. Yet a more transparent fallacy was never promulgated. What would Lord Salisbury say to it as applied to the Established Church? Mr. Voysey claimed freedom of the teacher to teach what he believed, and his supporters claimed freedom to attend the Church at which what they believed was taught. But if in a National Church such freedom is impossible, how can it be possible in a national school? Mr. Voysey and his friends have had to find freedom of teaching and hearing outside the so-called national system of religion; and our claim is that Lord Salisbury and his friends shall find the same freedom to teach and to learn what they believe outside the national education system.

The nation can only provide that part of education which all the nation wants. That part is called the secular—more correctly the literary part. Every man's children must be taught to read, write, and cipher; to understand a little of history and geography; and to know something of the laws of health. Our children all need to be made citizens by a citizen culture. But there our unity ends. One man wants his child to be brought up a Roman Catholic; another as a Baptist or Independent; another as a Churchman or Unitarian. Lord Salisbury and his friends plead that the schoolmaster should have liberty to teach all these children Church-of-Englandism; and that the Church-of-England parent shall have the services of the national schoolmaster to teach his children Church-of-England doctrines. We say that as between all these churches the national schoolmaster whom all support shall be neutral; that he shall not teach religion, shall teach only literary matters and leave each sect or Church to look after its own religious instruction. By all means let religious teaching be free—it is our object to make it so; but it can only be free as it is put under free conditions, and thrown on the voluntary, glad, and ready service of religious men.

The freedom we advocate is that of every man to do as he likes with his own creed; Lord Salisbury and the denominationalists contend for freedom to do as they choose with other people's religion. It is only in this sense of the claim of freedom that the proposal for unsectarian religious instruction can be described by Lord Salisbury as one of many efforts to abridge this freedom. No doubt there was an injurious vagueness about the League scheme of "unsectarian" education. There is, as Lord Salisbury says, "a religion unsectarian in the highest sense, which those whose belief rests on the best appreciated dogmas, will be forward to teach to the undeveloped minds of the young." We entirely agree with Lord Salisbury, that "you cannot take this religion away from the instincts and impulses out of which it springs, and put it in the formal words of an Act of Parliament" without doing irreparable injury. That is the very reason why the Nonconformists have reluctantly, but inevitably, been driven to the conclusion that no such teaching should be attempted. If religion is to be taught at all it must be by religious men. But if religious men are to teach religion they must be under no restraint but that of their own sense of right and duty. Not only the impulses and instincts out of which it springs, but the deep convictions in which it finds its root and sustenance, must be left absolutely free. But is such freedom possible in a national school? Grant that the national schoolmaster is a man filled and pervaded by these profound religious instincts and principles, would he feel it to be just that he should use his position to teach all his belief to all the children under his care? Would not some sense of what was due to the differing religious convictions of parents of different persuasions check his expression and chill his ardour. If not, his sense of justice would be imperfect, and his religion would be but of little value. But if he were thus held in check, would not his teaching be neutralised and rendered colourless, and half its force and value be destroyed? To give him absolute freedom you must give him the unquestionable right to teach all that he believes to be true. He has that right in a Sunday-school because the parent who sends his child to such a school does so because he wishes a full religious teaching to be given it. He would have it in a voluntary school to which parents sent their children out of free choice and under no force of compulsion. But in the more promiscuous assembly of a national school, where men of different denominations send their children, which men of antagonistic beliefs support, he can never have any such right. The very highest and best religious teaching given in such circumstances would be vitiated by injustice; the trail of the serpent of controversy would be over it all.

It is then from a high care for religion and from the highest possible perception of the value of religious teaching that we join in the demand that the teaching in the national schools shall be limited to national, that is to secular or literary subjects. Lord Salisbury, of course, takes up the cuckoo cry of "secularism," and represents the issue to be between secular education and religious education. "What we have to deal with," he says, "is the proposal for secularist teaching." It is not creditable to our public life that a man of Lord Salisbury's position should thus be able to misrepresent his opponents. We, however, accept the tribute to the strength of our position thus indirectly and unwittingly given. The people of England will soon distinguish between the limitation of the State to its own secular functions and the giving over of the young to secularist teaching; and those on whom the deception which confounds the two has been most successfully palmed will most resent it when they find it out. But Lord Salisbury is able, nevertheless, to give the great body of Nonconformists credit for religious motives. If, however, the question be as he represents it between secularist and religious education, how can he claim that we are quarrelling about trifles? First to exaggerate our difference in order to raise outside prejudice against us; then to pooh pooh the difference for the sake of persuading us to forego it, is certainly not to smooth the way to reconciliation. Lord Salisbury tells us that he and we—the advocates of denominational national education, and those who would make all national education secular and religious education voluntary—are fighting about trifles when the common enemy is battling at the gates. But if this difference is a trifle to him and his friends, it is no trifle to us; and it is they, not we, who should concede. We all agree with him that on the religious education of the children of the people our national liberty and prosperity depend. The only difference between us is as to how, when, and where—at whose charge and by what instruments—the religious education shall be given. The denominationalists claim that it shall be by the State; we demand that it be left to the churches. They ask to have this great duty perfunctorily done by State-paid officials; we demand that it shall be left to the loving zeal, the self-devoting energy, the earnest piety of warm-hearted religious men. Lord Salisbury instinctively confesses that it is a question between the State-Church principle and the ultimate principle of religious freedom. He asks for pressure to be brought to bear on the Government to keep them to "the Church side." The issue is, in fact, between the Established Church on one side, and the Nonconformists with all the free elements of the national life on the other; and whatever may be the tactics of either party or the varying fortunes of the fight, history, the spirit of the age, and time, are all on the side of those who will keep Cæsar to the things that are Cæsar's, and reserve to God the things that are God's.

PROGRESS OF THE AGRICULTURAL MOVEMENT.

A letter from our valued correspondent, Mr. C. P. Tebbutt, raises some points with regard to the labourers' strike in Warwickshire which are entitled to careful consideration. He objects to the phrases which we have employed to characterise the present condition of the agricultural labourers of England; and what is more important, he adopts Mr. Disraeli's view as to the sensible improvement which is supposed to have taken place in the circumstances of that class. We think that we should have no difficulty in proving that our language, instead of being highly coloured, is amply justified by official reports. The extracts from those documents which have appeared in our columns bear painful witness to the fact that thousands of our agricultural labourers do "vegetate in hopeless misery," and are "the abject class" we have described them as being. It is no answer to allege that the labourer is no worse off than certain classes of unskilled workmen in the great towns. We are unfortunately too well aware that in London, for example, there is a large redundant population on the verge of pauperism and even of starvation. We have no desire that a rural irruption should help to swell this vast aggregate of human misery; and, indeed, nobody proposes that anything so foolish should be attempted. A comparison between town and country is wholly beside the question. The real point is whether in large districts of rural England the lot of "the hewers of wood and drawers of water" is not simply disgraceful to a civilised nation; and whether this state of things is not capable, by judicious measures, of extensive amelioration. A similar inquiry may be equally necessary in the case of the lower strata of our urban population; and in fact this duty is not being neglected. Workmen by exercising the right of combination; philanthropists by attempting the reorganisation of charity; and emigration societies and clubs by assisting to transfer surplus labour from an overcrowded market to Canada and the United States, have done, and are doing, much to relieve even this overgrown metropolis from that incubus of poverty which has too long rested upon it. It is only fair that the agricultural labourers should participate in the same benefits, and not be left to stagnate from generation to generation.

We are quite sure that so far as Mr. Tebbutt's own circle of observation is concerned he speaks as the witness of truth; and, indeed, we do not understand him to controvert any of the main facts which have been put forward by the advocates of the labourer. He only thinks that a too gloomy view of the present state of affairs has been taken, and that a resort to combination or trades unionism would prove injurious to the best interests of the country. "To me," he says, "it seems clear that it is better for both masters and men that war should be avoided." It is unquestionably desirable that "war" should be avoided; but does combination, which is merely the organised assertion of a natural and admitted right, necessarily mean war or anything like it? And is there any reasonable hope that the agricultural labourer will ever really lift himself up to the position which he ought to occupy in a free country unless he learns to combine, as other classes have done, for his own protection and benefit? We will go a step further, and suggest that as, in the telling language of "S. G. O."—"the farmer took his farm, calculating on the information given him as to the average amount of poor-rate, the rate of wages paid on the estate, the amount of accommodation on it for the labourers he would

require," it may also be the duty of the tenant farmers to combine. No one, we think, can read "S. G. O.'s" thoughtful letter, especially that portion of it which describes the wretched village life of the peasant, without feeling that, however deplorable may be the necessity for combination, a crisis has arrived which will admit of no palliatives—no half-way measures. Mr. Disraeli, in one of his ingenious but misleading speeches, has laid it down as essential to the agricultural labourers' well-being that each family should be provided with "a porch, a tank, and an oven"; and to do him justice, he appears to have supplied his own cottagers with these three requisites. But even the boon of "a porch, a tank, and an oven," will not fill an empty cupboard or keep the gaunt labourer out of the workhouse when winter sets in; and although Mr. Disraeli may be a good landlord, the special correspondent of the *Daily News*, who has replied to the Tory leader's attack upon him by paying a visit to Hughenden and describing the actual state of the parish in which he is "the principal landowner," shows that the social conditions which exist in that picturesque district are the reverse of satisfactory, and that the Buckinghamshire peasant would be amply justified in endeavouring by combination to do that for himself which the squirearchy have left undone. The patriarchal system has been tried long enough; and when in the very cradle of the Young England party it has egregiously failed, it is surely better that full-grown men should make the experiment of endeavouring, by associated effort, to raise themselves in the social scale.

There is a more general view of this movement upon which we think too great stress cannot be laid. We refer to its spontaneity. It has extended from county to county purely as the result of natural causes. Nor has it assumed the character of a blind, or reckless agitation. Even in Warwickshire it is not pretended that the men have made unreasonable demands. The indignation of the farmers has been excited, not so much by the proposed increase in the rate of wages as by a mysterious dread of trades-unionism. It is only the Wellesbourne men who are actually out on strike; but there has been more than one lock-out for the purpose of awing unionists into submission. Meanwhile, fields are untilled and the operations of husbandry are suspended, while Mr. Arch, with a true appreciation of his mastery of the situation, instead of multiplying disaffected idlers, simply transfers the unemployed labour to distant parts of the country. It is easy to see who are likely to be the chief sufferers—the farmers, who are losing their men, or the men themselves, who are exchanging penury for plenty. In Herefordshire a similar process is going on; migration and emigration being the watchwords of the movement in that county. If the men who combine shut their eyes to the varying circumstances of the country, and doggedly persisted in agitating for higher wages without reference to the state of the labour market, we might entertain some fear lest the movement should degenerate into a brutal struggle of class against class; but nothing of the sort has happened or appears likely to happen. At Leamington the labourers unhesitatingly accepted the wise counsel of Mr. Edward Jenkins—that they should not permit trades-union delegates from the towns to vote at their meetings. They do not undervalue the sympathy which has been extended to them from this quarter, but it is a sympathy which ought not to be accompanied by any power of interference. The movement is now fairly launched; and its progress will no doubt be attended by some mistakes, but these will not prevent a great reformation from taking place in the condition of the agricultural labourer if he is only true to himself in this crisis of his history.

THE LONDON SCHOOL BOARD AND ITS CRITICS.

The moral of recent events in Manchester would seem to be that facility in epigram is much more popular than hard work in the public service. For a reverse illustration we may take the case of the London School Board, a body composed for the most part of comparatively obscure, hard-working men, incapable perhaps of making fine speeches, but who for a year and a half, in addition to robbing themselves of leisure, have devoted no inconsiderable amount of the time which to many of them means money, in the disinterested prosecution of a great educational reform entrusted to them by the suffrages of their fellow-citizens. If any of them in entering upon this duty were in any degree actuated by the modest ambition which finds a reward in public gratitude, we fear that they have been by this time undeceived. The proverbial "more kicks than halfpence" fairly describes the too common meed of merit which is all that they have hitherto received. The ill-natured injustice with which in some quarters, from motives only too obvious, the labours of this board has been regarded, has culminated within the last ten days in two acrid articles in the *Times* and the *Saturday Review* papers, which, if their own estimate of themselves may be allowed, are pre-eminently the representatives of legitimate public opinion. In those wise utterances we are asked to believe that a number of able men actively engaged in the affairs of life have perversely wasted some four or five hundred hours—for to this at least the published record of attendances would amount, when committees are included—in twaddling talk and needless pragmatical discussion. The amiable charity which is ever ready to dispense with proof for assertions which tickle the sense of self-importance, by making all to be fools but ourselves, may swallow this if it chooses. But having been favoured, in common with our contemporaries, with a copy of the "Report of the School Board for London to the Education Department" adopted at the board meeting held on March 27th, we have taken some pains to look into the matter, and in the interests of common justice as well as of national education, we think it well to present our readers with the results of our own observations.

The proceedings of the School Board for London are of more than local interest. Of special import to the metropolis, as an experiment in municipal management, the action of a board so eminently respectable in its composition, and responsible for so enormous a population, has naturally been watched with interest, and has often been perhaps too slavishly imitated by similar boards throughout the land. In London the inevitable conflict between the old sectarian and exclusive ideas on the one hand, and the more generous project on the other of a truly national education at which the recent Act professedly aims, has assumed greater proportions than elsewhere, and from the very greatness of the scale affords more striking lessons. We think, then, that we shall consult both the interest and the profit of our readers, by the remarks to which we invite their attention.

As the report in question reminds us, the chairman of the board was elected on Dec. 15, 1870. Now let us bear in mind what was the nature of the problem which the members were called upon to solve. The population concerned was upwards of three millions and a quarter, of endlessly varied ranks, occupations, habits, and requirements. Under any circumstances, it is obvious that the supply of elementary education to so vast a population required, in the interests both of economy and efficiency, some definite well-conceived plan involving much preliminary inquiry and deliberation. And if it is objected that the work of the board was not to supply the whole needs of the population, but only to supplement the schools already existing, a moment's thought will show that it was precisely this element in the question which indefinitely perplexed the problem before the board. To say nothing of the old foundation schools, sectarian effort assisted by Government grants had for half a century been dotting its schools here and there about the town, without any system, without any definite and well-founded estimate of the needs of the various localities affected. Now even if the board had represented a voluntary society endowed with unlimited funds, common sense would have suggested that to prevent any waste of money some careful inquiry should be made as to the educational wants of different neighbourhoods. Still, in the case we have supposed, and especially if the object had been to indoctrinate the population with the opinions of any particular sect or school of thought, much might have been risked, and buildings erected here and there according to the fancy or the haphazard information of the board. But the natural jealousy of two parties amongst the constituents of the board made such a course as this impossible. There were the representatives of the existing schools on the one hand, suspicious of the education to be given under the recent Act, and uneasy at any encroachment on their domain; while, on the other hand, the ratepayers on whom the cost of the new movement threatened to impose no slight burden, very properly watched with keen criticism the slightest approach to extravagance. And besides, even if no such jealousy had been apparent, still as a legally constituted body the board were bound to take care that they did not overstep their proper function, which was to supply the actual deficiency, neither more nor less. To judge by the criticisms which have been too rife of late, there are those who would have wished the members of the board, the moment they had elected their chairman, to sally forth into the streets, and wherever they found a squalid neighbourhood prolific in children but without a school in sight, to mark out a block of land and send for a contractor there and then to commence the erection of a building. Such critics perhaps have not cared to inform themselves that at the beginning of last year, Lord Sandon, in his generous ardour, stung perhaps by the ignorant reproaches which were already heard, carried a resolution that some twenty plots of land should be at once secured in different parts of the metropolis, where the educational destitution was obvious or notorious. The objections made in regard to several of the proposed schools by the clergy alarmed for their own preserves, or by school managers frightened at the prospect of so formidable a rivalry—objections which could only be met by accurate statistics, are but a faint hint of the storm that would have been aroused had the board ventured farther without carefully surveying their ground. And if the process of acquiring those twenty plots should appear to have been somewhat slow, those who know by experience the difficulty of obtaining land on reasonable terms precisely on the spot where it is required, will find cause rather to applaud the business-like tact and management by which several sites have already been acquired without any recourse to compulsory powers. As to these compulsory powers, the board has taken the very earliest opportunity of using them, by giving the requisite notices at the end of last year; and those who are acquainted with the routine involved, will be aware that any acceleration of the process is legally impossible.

Meantime, oblivious of carping criticism, the board has been diligently and laboriously pursuing the preliminary work which was absolutely essential to the soundness of its further proposals. And we have in the report before us a monument of organising skill, of careful work, of comprehensive design, and of minute attention to detail, such as confers lasting honour upon the board, and especially on the statistical committee by whose personal industry it has been produced. The report itself, apart from the appendices, consists of fourteen folio pages, in which, with a clearness and succinctness that leave nothing to be desired, the general results of the educational census are given. From this it appears that when inefficient schools are excluded, additional accommodation is required in the metropolis for 103,863 children. But this general fact would have been of no avail, had the board been unable to point out the precise localities in which the deficiency exists, and the exact amount of deficiency in each. Accordingly the maps which accompany the report show the ten school divisions subdivided each into thirty or forty small blocks, which will prove convenient not only for the purpose of enumeration, but for the organisation of the plan which the board has in view for the practical enforcement of compulsory attendance. With the maps before him, and the appendices of the report, extending to 300 folio pages, any one interested in the educational condition of the metropolis can see at a glance not only the general results, but the exact state of any single neighbourhood within the Parliamentary boundaries. By aid of these appendices he may find the number of children between the ages of three and seven, seven and ten, ten and thirteen, respectively, residing in any of the subdivisions. He may put his finger upon the precise place where elementary schools already exist, and he will have an exact statement of the nature and extent of the accommodation thus provided. He will find also the number of children in any of these blocks not attending school, and the alleged reasons of their absence. And not to peruse in detail one of the most complete and elaborate documents ever issued by any public body, any ratepayer who chooses to take the trouble is put into a position to judge for himself, on the fullest information, of the adequacy or inadequacy, the economy or the extravagance, of the provision which the board proposes to make for any neighbourhood in which he is interested.

We find that for the present the proposal is to erect new schools for a hundred thousand, or rather more than three thousand less than the actual deficiency. We are glad to find that while, as might be expected, the squalid and populous East makes the largest demands—Hackney and the Tower Hamlets for about twenty thousand each—yet in the impartial discharge of its duty the board will be compelled to establish its national, and let us hope unsectarian schools in all parts of the metropolis.

And now we are in a position to say one word on the real causes for the unjust and ill-natured attacks which have been made upon a hard-working body of men. "The ponderous statis-

tics," says the *Saturday Review*, "would have been more in place if they had been compiled after, instead of before, the supply of crying educational destitution." Putting the cart before the horse is nothing to this; for the horse might push the cart, whereas statistics obtained after their only object had been fulfilled could do nothing but spoil good paper. The suggestion seems about as logical as the proposal to hang a man first and try him afterwards. But we do our too clever contemporary injustice. His notion of "educational destitution" is the dearth of scholars in many sectarian schools. His idea of the mission proper for a board elected by the ratepayers of the metropolis to inaugurate a new era in education seems to be, that it should have acted as a general board of guardians armed with compulsory powers to fill the parsons' schools, and doubtless to subsidise them out of the rates. The thinly disguised ecclesiasticism which so lately made a hollow pretext out of the poor man's conscience now advocates the tyrannous enforcement of compulsion on all sects alike, before the slightest attempt has been made to secure that choice of schools which was before alleged to be one of the sacred rights of man. The London Board has taken a nobler and a juster view of its duties. *Hinc illæ lacrymæ!* Hence too we imagine the dissatisfaction which, if we may rely on the *Times* and the *Saturday Review*, exists among the members of the board who may be supposed to befriend the policy which those papers maintain. Now we are far from agreeing with the religious policy of the board; we think that in adopting Mr. W. H. Smith's resolution they have entered on a course of injustice which must necessarily perpetuate the bitterness of sectarian animosity, while the instruction which they profess to give must, we are persuaded, be a mockery, and even a fruitful source of mischief. We are disposed to complain likewise that in regard to the 25th clause of the Act they have unfairly shirked the question of principle. But we cannot allow our difference from them on one or two points, however important, to lessen our appreciation of the otherwise broad and comprehensive views which they manifest, or of the high estimate which they have formed of their mission. A board which in fifteen months has reduced the educational chaos of London to clear statistical order; which has drawn up a scheme of education obnoxious to jealous criticism only because of its generous aims; which has worked the Industrial Schools Act with such vigour as already materially to diminish juvenile vagabondism in the streets; which has not only adopted compulsory bye-laws, but devised for their practical application an elaborate scheme to bring every group of houses in this human wilderness under surveillance, a scheme now actually in process of realisation; which has already advanced so far with its indispensable preliminary arrangements that its active operations have been begun, and are extending with rapidity, as the ratepayers will soon understand; such a board little deserves the sneers which are only to be accounted for by disappointed sectarian arrogance. It has acted bravely and wisely in first carefully surveying the enormous field before it, and deliberately laying its plans. We believe that by the next generation the three years' work of the School Board for London, some mistakes notwithstanding, will be regarded as the inauguration of a new era in the history of popular enlightenment.

The Rev. Geo. J. Proctor has accepted an invitation to the pastorate of Mornington Church, Hampstead-road, and will commence his ministry on Sunday, the 21st inst.

THE LIFEBOAT INSTITUTION.—The Duke of Edinburgh presided on Tuesday at the annual meeting of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution at the Mansion House. His royal highness said that as a sailor he naturally took a great interest in a society which was as national in its character as it was beneficent in its object. Indeed, the services of an institution of this description, which since its commencement had saved nearly 21,000 British and foreign sailors, could not be overrated in a maritime country like this. The society, his royal highness added, seemed to grow every year in the affections of the British people, on whom it depended for its support, and it would never, he trusted, seek Government help or control. The report stated that during the past year the society had contributed to the rescue of 882 lives, and that the number of lives saved during the forty-eight years, from the establishment of the institution in 1824 to the end of 1871, either by its lifeboats or by special exertions for which it had granted rewards, was 20,746. The receipts during the year 1871 had been 28,140*l.* 4s. 3d., and the expenditure, including liabilities, 29,421*l.* 1s. 8d. Among the speakers at the meeting were Admiral Sir G. Sartorius, Admiral Sir John Hay, the Lord Mayor, Sir John Bennett, Sir James Elphinstone, Lord Garlies, and Sir T. Moss.

Literature.

*CHRISTIANITY AND HISTORICAL CRITICISM.**

The committee responsible for the delivery of the Boston Lectures of 1871, tell us in the preface to the volume that "it was their aim to "secure a course of lectures somewhat more "popular in character than those of the year "before." We regret that the aim after popularity has affected not only the choice of subjects, but in some cases also the treatment of the themes. This volume is not nearly so satisfactory as the one noticed by us last month; superficiality and rhetoric largely take the place of close reasoning. We cannot see why Dr. Austin Phelps's sermon of ten years ago, old-fashioned in its Conservatism even then, should have been republished in a work designed to meet the difficulties of modern scepticism; as little can we understand what valuable purpose is to be served by the somewhat bombastic oratory of Dr. Cheever. Dr. J. P. Thompson's lecture is superior to these two, but a few statements occur in it that an exacting scholarliness would have corrected or modified. We do not suppose that he intends to surrender the seventeenth chapter of Deuteronomy, but if he do not we fail to understand his statement that "Moses made no pro-"vision for a King." Dr. Thompson's "English History" is also at fault. He refers to the incidents of Arthur's story which Tennyson has clothed anew with life as being "legends of Alfred"; overlooking the fact that Arthur is a Celtic, not a Saxon hero, and that the Arturian legends belong only to spots in and out of England where the Celts were finally driven. There are other lectures in the book which, although "popular" in treatment, are scholarly. Such are Dr. Tyler's and Dr. Bacon's—which are, however, much more expository than critical—and notably that by Professor Thayer on "Criticism Confirma-"tory of the Gospels." The lectures in the English volume dealing with historical criticism are of a higher class than the American lectures as a whole; although for apologetic as well as literary reasons we should gladly see Dr. Temple's essay on "The Education of the "World" substituted for the Bishop of Carlisle's lecture on "The Gradual Develop-"ment of Revelation."

From Professor Rawlinson we get, as might be expected, "Light Thrown by Modern Dis-"coveries" on "The Alleged Historical Diffi-"culties of the Old and New Testaments." From the nature of his subject his lecture is somewhat fragmentary, but it is none the less interesting. Bishop Colenso is somewhat satirical at the expense of those who regard such discoveries as that of the Moabite Stone as confirmatory of the faith; but it is a real gain to sacred history to have the side-lights of profane history thrown upon it. All criticism of the Biblical narrative puts it upon its trial, and all incidental references to Biblical incidents give a sense of reality to Bible history. These discoveries are moreover of interest to the expositor as well as to the apologist; whatever gives a clearer apprehension of Biblical history is welcome to the Bible student.

The two lectures on "The Mythical Theories "of Christianity," by the Rev. Charles Row, and the "Evidential Value of St. Paul's "Epistles," by Professor Stanley Leathes, set the present condition of Christian evidence fairly before the reader. Both these papers establish that the Gospel narrative, essentially as we now have it, was believed in, not by individuals merely, but by communities, in the age immediately following that of Christ, and hence that the narrative itself must have had its origin in his own age. Professor Leathes argues this from the phenomena presented by the four Epistles universally allowed to be those of the Apostle Paul, that to the Romans, the two to the Corinthians, and the one to the Galatians; and Mr. Row proves it from the data required for the mythical theories. The singularly able lecture of Professor Thayer, entitled, "Critism Confirmatory of the Gospels" (Boston Lectures, No. VIII.), goes over much the same ground. We do not know where a reader may obtain in so small a compass so clear and full a view of recent theories hostile to the historical credibility of the Gospel narratives as in Professor Thayer's lecture. He gives a brief history of the mythical and Tübingen schools before he proceeds to comment upon them and refute them.

Professor Thayer points out the inestimable advantage it has been to Christianity to have had criticism directed to the documents and early history of the faith. "Criticism," says he, "has been tributary to faith in the Gospels "through its methods of interpretation. It has "been ministering to faith in the Gospels by "recognising the problem of Christianity as an "historical problem. Service has been ren-"dered to the cause of faith by the conclusions "which internal criticism has reached respect-"ing particular Gospels." And "Critical "research has been rendered tributary to faith "by increasing the external influence in support "of the Gospels." Under this last head of "external evidence," he describes the bearing of the "Muratorian Fragment on the Canon," the Pseudo-Clementine, Homilies, the treatise of Hippolytus "Against all Heresies," and the Epistle of Barnabas in the Sinaitic manuscript.

It is impossible to give our readers quotations which shall at all represent the value of these papers. The force of their arguments is cumulative: our work is simply to indicate the purpose of the lectures, and commend them as being intelligent and candid statements of the Christian side in the historical controversies of the times. Other papers there are in both volumes which to many readers will have a far greater interest than these. The delineation of the Person of Jesus has a never-failing charm, and the argument, from the uniqueness of His character, derives a more than doubled force from the fact that the heart has been already captivated by the portrait before the reasoning from it is advanced. And it is "with the "heart" that men believe in Him; the homage which He constrains from even cold and captious critics is a mighty witness to Him. The moral progress of Christendom, too, is a theme on which it is hard not to wax eloquent, and equally hard to resist the appeal to faith. Some may ask, why not be content to rest Christianity on this foundation alone? The spiritual Christ of the gospels and of Christendom is quite enough without any evidence as to his historical actuality. Such persons, however, forget that faith is exacting in proportion as it is exalted; and that all the moral persuasiveness of Christ's character will only set men the more eagerly and anxiously searching into the evidences for the reality of His portraiture because they are so deeply interested in holding it firmly. Christ is too dear a vision for men to rest content while there is but a possibility of his proving a fiction or a dream. Much of modern scepticism itself is exacting because the possibility of mistake or even of doubt must not be left. The intensity of Thomas's longing to be convinced made him refuse a testimony which in ordinary affairs would have satisfied him. Christian apologists may well complain of the uncritical, illogical temper which, by declaring miracles *a priori* impossible, or by any other *petitio principii*, makes investigation an impertinence since the question is foreclosed; but they have reason to be grateful to any one whose earnestness in demanding evidence sets them on searching a field even yet but partially explored. It is on the ground of historical criticism that Christianity will stand or fall. And Christianity has never yet had reason to shrink from historical criticism. It had its origin in an historic period, and the substantial accuracy of its earliest records is confirmed by incidental discovery and keen search.

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*M. TAINE ON ENGLAND.**

It is one marked advantage of M. Taine's style of criticism, that he prepares himself very carefully. He studies conditions exhaustively—conditions of race, conditions of climate, and indeed, all other social or determining circumstances whatsoever. If he tends rather much to reduce literary and art products to mere necessary results of strictly ascertainable causes—regarding causes in their whole range as being in themselves mere *facts*; yet it is something that he is willing to go very far back, and in eliminating soul in the strict sense from the history of man's mental development, still does him the justice to acknowledge that the roots of present phenomena lie at the very birth of races. Some one has said that the gate of gifts closes upon individuals at their birth; M. Taine holds that it is precisely the same with races of men. He is a fatalist of a peculiar sort, but towards the sort of fatalism which he preaches, many literary men and philosophers who were no means Positivists in the proper sense, had a decided leaning. When Goethe said that man's destiny was woven of necessity and chance, he had a vague view of M. Taine's theory of *dependencies*—or the sum total of present tendencies which is the result of long-continued

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* *Modern Scepticism.* A Course of Lectures delivered at the request of the Christian Evidence Society. (London: Hodder and Stoughton.)

Boston Lectures 1871. *Christianity and Scepticism; comprising a Treatment of Questions in Biblical Criticism.* (London: Hodder and Stoughton.)

* *Notes on England.* By H. TAINE, D.C.L. Translated by W. F. Rae. (Strahan and Co.)

relations, and of *conditions* or the formative causes of the present epoch. Hegel also enunciated the idea clearly and summed it up in his famous chapter, Geographische Grundläge "der Geschichte"; from him there can be no doubt M. Taine has learned a very great deal, although he verifies and illustrates it in a manner all his own. A strict and necessary natural sequence of development is established, there is a backbone, or series of linked joints in historical successions. Each genuine product is the parent of another, and nothing that is great and monumental stands apart from the chain. Mr. Rae, who has translated these notes on England with peculiar skill, has done no slight service in here presenting us with a short biographical sketch of M. Taine, and a lucid summary of his leading doctrines. He has translated the preface of the second edition of the "Essays Historical and Critical," in which occurs this passage:—

"You have found and sought the definition of a group; I mean that small, exact, and expressive phrase which encloses in its narrow compass the essential characters whence the others can be deduced. Let us here suppose that it designates those of our seventeenth century; compare it with these by which you have designated the preceding epoch, and the others more ancient of the same history in the same country; search now whether the diverse terms of this series do not contain some common element. One is to be found, the character and spirit peculiar to the race, transmitted from generation to generation; the same through the changes of culture, the diversities of organisation, and the variety of products. This character and this spirit, once constituted, are found to be more or less disposed for discipline or personal independence; more or less fitted for nice reasoning or poetical emotion; more or less disposed to the religion of the conscience, or of logic, or of custom, or of the eyes. At a given moment, during a period, they produce a work; and their nature joined to that of their work, is the *condition* of the work which follows; as in an organised body, the primitive temperament, joined to the anterior state, is the condition of the succeeding state. Here, as in the physical world, the condition is sufficient and necessary; if it be present, the work cannot be wanting; if it be absent, the work cannot appear. From the English character, and from the despotism bequeathed by the Tudors to the Stuarts, proceeded the English revolution. From the French character, and from the aristocratic anarchy bequeathed by the civil wars to the Bourbons, proceeded the monarchy of Louis XIV. To produce the superb flowering arts of design under Leo X. was required the precocious and picturesque Italian genius, with the prolonged reign of the energetic manners and the corporeal instincts of the Middle Ages. To produce in the first centuries of our era the astonishing growth of philosophies and mystical religions, the speculative aptitude of our Aryan races was required, at the same time as the crushing of the world, repressed under a despotism without outlet, and the enlargement of the mind, widened by the ruin of nationalities."

From the outset of his career, M. Taine has been endeavouring to apply these principles. His first great prize essay is an exhibition of them; in his last work he is still more clear and in their emphatic expression. He has never wavered or lapsed from his first love. His "History of English Literature," which we have recently noticed, is a great work; for, in the subject, he found very salient points in view of his theory. And these notes—the result of visits made to England in order to prepare for this History—are very valuable in relation to his method. They show us how conscientiously he works; how laborious, how observant, how patiently genial, how reservedly tolerant he is. And yet it is impossible that we could have found a better illustration of his own theory. He speaks of great things, of small things, as a Frenchman, although a Frenchman of the ripest culture. He tries to lay aside preconceived notions; but, in spite of this, everything is judged purely from a French standard. Take a Frenchman educated at the College Bourbon, familiar with the *salons* of Paris, versatile, full of *esprit*, of wit, in love with the easy, graceful garrulousness of French society of the better class, though not in any way disposed to boast of it—and how can he separate himself from his nation and his epoch, merely by crossing the Channel, and trying for a few weeks to become an Englishman? Let him struggle as he will, he will be partial when he only appears to himself to be sympathetic. The most subtle traits will elude him, or be mistaken for others. M. Taine's "Notes on England" are just excellently-ordered talk, and they are to be enjoyed by the wise English reader, just as M. Taine himself would enjoy the talk of a cultured, clever Englishman about France and French affairs. These notes are really no more than this; but, for all that, they were well worth translating, were it only that we might be led to try to "see oorsels as ithers see us."

M. Taine has made a good deal of our English awkwardness; of our want of social tact and delicacy of perception in many things; of our love of beer and fiery wines; and all these defects are in some way or other attributed to the dampness and rigour of the climate. Since the time M. Taine wrote, as his translator has well pointed out, a fiscal change has proved that he was in error in one of his inferences; for the light wines of France, heretofore shut out, are now very largely consumed among the classes that were doomed by him to a necessary liking for spirits and fiery wines. Many similar points might be noted. M. Taine is more inclined to do us justice for our hard-handed practicality; for our fearless manner of fronting difficulties; for our quiet domesticity, and our ready submission to order. He magnifies our poetry for faithfully "producing the aims of "the inner being," choosing "Aurora Leigh" as a typical specimen; and condemns us for reading too much *thought* into pictures when we should be content with "deriving pleasure "through the eyes," and yet he recognises a certain sluggishness of mental action, due, of course, to influences of climate. We can scarcely expect strait-laced consistency in such writing as this, of course; but with all his grace and delicacy, M. Taine is sometimes all too broadly self-contradictory. This is one of M. Taine's most striking social criticisms—

"Generally an Englishwoman is more thoroughly beautiful than a Frenchwoman. The principal cause of this is the hygiene; the children ride on horseback, are much in the open air, do not dine with their parents, do not eat sweetmeats. Moreover, the nerves are less excited, the temperament is calmer. . . . On the other hand, the Englishwoman is less agreeable; she does not dress for her husband; she does not know how to make a pretty woman of herself; she has no talent for rendering herself fascinating and enticing at home; she is unacquainted with a number of fine and delicate graces; she considers it unworthy of her to employ minor means for re-awakening love and fondness; more frequently still she is not clever enough to invent them. She puts on handsome new dresses, is most careful about cleanliness, but nothing more. *She is not attractive; one soon wearies beside her.* . . . According to C——, an Englishwoman is incapable of presiding in a drawing-room as cleverly as a Frenchwoman; I mean drawing-rooms like those of Paris, in which one is amused; he barely knows two or three married ladies of his country who could do it. The Englishwoman has not sufficient tact, promptitude, suppleness to accommodate herself to persons and things, to vary a greeting, comprehend a hint, insinuate praise, make each guest feel that she thinks his presence of much consequence. She is affable only, she merely possesses kindness and serenity. *For myself, I desire nothing more, and I can imagine nothing better.*"

Such is a specimen of M. Taine's manner of social criticism. He is always incisive, brilliant, full of point and sparkle; and, notwithstanding that he is occasionally rather sharp in his judgment, he is always truly enjoyable. In one word, he has made criticism an art, and his social criticism is every way as brilliant as his criticisms of books and pictures, of which indeed it is but the other side.

"MIDDLEMARCH."[*]

It is difficult to realise the feelings with which a common-place reader of fiction, who devours novels from Mudie's at the rate of half-a-dozen volumes a week, will regard "Middlemarch." Of course it must be read and praised as the work of a novelist so popular as George Eliot, but we fancy there are not a few who will pronounce it slow. Here we are at the end of the third part—that is, we have got an instalment equal, certainly, to more than an ordinary volume-and-a-half, and there has been nothing more exciting than the death of a disagreeable old gentleman, for whose property a number of the *dramatis personæ* have been waiting. We have certainly a marriage out of which some unpleasantness has grown, and more seem likely to follow, and two engagements which, if not particularly interesting as yet, may furnish materials for future complications, but the movement of the tale is not rapid, or at all sensational. As to dipping in here and there to catch the drift of the story, it is about as unprofitable an employment as any one could undertake, since even the little there is to gather can hardly be reached at all by so summary a process. In short, it is in an entirely different line that the strength and beauty of the story lie. That there is a well-conceived plot, and one which, when fully developed, will deserve the highest praise, we think we have sufficient indications. Not, indeed, that we could venture to give any forecastings of its probable course, for our authoress is far too accomplished an artist to give such indications of her purpose. But the manner in which the materials are being collected, and the character of the materials themselves, alike assure us that the tale which is to be constructed out of them will be of no ordinary interest. Possibly its *dénouement* may disappoint ordinary expectations. For George Eliot is not one to move along a beaten track, but we doubt not it will be marked by the same genius which is so manifest in these earlier parts of the story. Still it is not in the tale that the great charm of "Middlemarch" consists. If there were no plot at all, and the story was but a very slight thread on which to hang the sketches of character, the philosophic observations, the suggestive bits of practical wisdom of which the book is so full, would have ample attraction for all thoughtful readers, and meet with a popularity of the best kind. George Eliot, however, is too skilful a writer to treat her plot in this fashion. She understands that the true mode of using fiction is to make it the means of developing character and principle in a natural way, and that where this is not done, and where the characters have no vital relation to the plot, there is an impression of unreality and consequent weariness. She trusts, therefore, for the development of character rather to the incidents themselves than to any distinct and elaborate portraiture. At the same time there is nothing of which she is more fond than of turning aside to throw out passing reflections, which at least indicate her own preferences. In whatever light it be regarded the book is one of the most remarkable of its class. Its intellectual power, as shown alike in the originality of its thinking and the force and terseness of its style, is very great, and in virtue of it will attract readers who would throw down nine-tenths of novels in weariness if not disgust, but who find here something to study.

In the present part we begin better to understand most of the leading characters. That "buoyant-hearted young gentleman," Fred. Vincy, more thoroughly reveals himself as one of a class of whom we have too many, and to whom the world is only too indulgent, showing itself ready to condone their selfishness and extravagance in consideration of their elegance and outward amiability. With inimitable skill his weak, pleasure-loving, sanguine character is described, and we see clearly whither he is being drifted by trust in "assets of hopefulness "which had a gorgeous superfluity about "them." Modern fiction has plenty of such characters, but we doubt whether there is another of the type which can fairly be placed in comparison with this life-like portrait. The episode of that journey to Houndsley horse-fair, where he was to enter on his "run of "luck," in which he expected "that by dint of "'swapping' he should gradually metamorphose a horse worth forty pounds into a horse "that would fetch a hundred at any moment" is wonderfully well told. The portraits of the horse-dealers and the account of poor Fred's adventures are intensely real, and we like them all the better because they convey a necessary warning to young men who are disposed to pride themselves on their skill in horseflesh. We hardly know which is the least attractive, the victim or the deceivers—the innocent fool who deludes himself with the notion that he can get something out of the knowing ones, or those horsey gentlemen who are laughing in their sleeves at his credulity and innocence. The family of the Garths also comes more prominently into view, and Mary especially appears to great advantage. Our authoress gives us some very distinct types of female character. Dorothea and her sister, Mary Garth and Rosamond Vincy, and to some extent Mrs. Garth and Mrs. Vincy, are companion pictures, each pair having its marked features, and each of its members standing out in striking contrast to the other. In some points Mary Garth is our favourite, although we must plead guilty to a greater liking for Rosamond and Celia than our authoress, who plainly thinks them very inferior beings to either Dorothea or Mary. Among the most effective scenes in the volume are the interview between Fred. Vincy and Mary Garth, the courtship of Mr. Lydgate, the waiting of the relatives for the death of Peter Featherstone, and, most impressive and dramatic of the whole, the death scene in which Mary Garth plays so noble a part.

[*] *Middlemarch.* By George Eliot. Book III. Waiting for Death. (Edinburgh and London: W. Blackwood and Sons.)

ENGLISH PROSE LITERATURE.[*]

The title of this book very fully describes its purpose and its chief features. It resembles other manuals of English prose literature in containing an historical account of the chief writers and their works arranged under the century in which they lived. But it differs from all others that we have seen in this respect—that the passages quoted are selected to illustrate the peculiar excellencies and other characteristics of their authors. The whole work is divided into three parts—the first being called an introduction, but constituting a very essential part of the entire scheme. It contains the exposition of what is called style; and, beginning with the most elementary sentences and their construction, it proceeds to a very complete analysis of the more complex forms of thought,

[*] *A Manual of English Prose Literature, Biographica and Critical, Designed Mainly to Show Characteristics of Style.* By William Minto, M.A. (Edinburgh and London: Blackwood and Sons.)

and to a classification of the different kinds of composition. The whole result furnishes the student with a collection of canons of criticism by which the writings of each auther may subsequently be tested. Thus, under the heading, "Qualities of Style," we have—Intellectual qualities—Simplicity and Clearness; Emotional qualities—Strength, Pathos, the Judicious; Elegancies of Style—Melody, Harmony, Taste.

The second part of the book consists of the application of the principles set forth in the introduction to three eminent writers of our own day—De Quincey, Macaulay, and Carlyle. A biographical notice of each of these writers is given, followed by a sketch of their character and opinions, and then a number of passages are selected for analysis. We have read this part of the work with very great pleasure and interest, though sometimes we confess without remembering the literary discipline for which it was written. We are specially delighted with the account of Mr. Carlyle and his writings. It is so rare to find justice done to this remarkable man even by his own countrymen, that we would willingly accord to Mr. Minto's manual a hearty welcome even were its other merits less conspicuous than they really are. Considering that this manual is intended for students, we cannot too highly praise the restraint which the author has placed upon his enthusiasm for Mr. Carlyle's writings. He does not forget that his work is intended to help in the formation of a good style; and that therefore undue praise given to a marked literary individuality might seriously hinder the student from reaching his end. The question, how far it is possible to assist any one in obtaining a "good style" by rules for composition, must undoubtedly be answered in the negative when only rules are given; but we agree with Mr. Minto in thinking that great good may be derived from rules which are themselves derived from the analysis of good literary examples. Simply therefore as a guide to literary skill, precision, and excellence, his manual is of great value; but beyond that it has an historical value that should not be overlooked.

"The earliest book of prose able to take for "itself a place in our literature, was a book of "travels by Sir John Mandeville." From the publication of that work in the 14th century to the commencement of the present century, the whole space of nearly five hundred years is divided by Mr. Minto into ten portions; each, with the exception of the first, coinciding with the life of a generation. All the writers of these periods are, for the most part, named, and classified. Some are merely named, others have a short notice added, while the chief of them are subjected to the same treatment as is accorded in the second part of the work to De Quincey, Macaulay, and Carlyle.

Those who are practically interested in scholastic instruction will see from the exposition we have given of the plan and method of this work, that it is admirably suited to the purposes of a class-book. It contains just so much as a student should be expected to know of the order and character of English prose books, while it will serve as a sound basis for a more elaborate structure. We can also cordially recommend it to the general reader as containing such sketches of the more important contributions to our prose literature as will afford interest sufficient to fill any two hours of leisure, and stimulate to a more detailed study of the works of any particular author.

MAGAZINES FOR APRIL.

(Second Notice.)

Macmillan is an unusually good number. The stories progress favourably. A sad, depressing sense of cynicism appears in "Christina North" now and then—a hint of disbelief in human nature, although it is nowhere directly intimated—which makes us think whether we have not been in contact with the writer before. But there are points of very deep interest, skilfully treated. Bernard Oswestry is excellent. "The Adventures of a Phaeton" is bright, light, rattling, but tends to discursiveness, in spite of Mr. Black's undoubted power and humour; something, however, is to be laid to the charge of the form adopted. Mr. Fairlie Clarke contributes a capital paper on "The "Use and Abuse of Hospitals," and Captain Flood Page a most practical and sensible article on the House of Lords. The reforms proposed are just sufficiently radical to save that institution and conserve its influence. But the most notable article in this number is decidedly that of Professor Masson on Mazzini. The Professor had the advantage of intimate acquaintance with Mazzini for more than twenty years, and is therefore well qualified to speak of him. To Mazzini's noble personal character he bears the highest testimony, as do all who knew him. That one who was the centre of plots and conspiracies—surrounded by a ring of daring men who had all to gain and but little to lose, as was indeed inevitable in the circumstances—that such a one should have maintained himself for so long a track of years absolutely unsullied by any of the lowness that usually consorts with plot and intrigue, is itself sufficiently noteworthy. And then Mazzini was a philosopher and a moralist as well as a politician and a patriot. Professor Masson has tenderly sketched him for us in all these aspects, with a fairness, a clearness, and vigour which are only too seldom met with in periodical literature. The most valuable portion of the paper is that doubtless where he exhibits those first principles of Mazzini which he applied alike to philosophy, art, and politics, and from the due appreciation of which we reach the unity that underlies all Mazzini's teachings. It is difficult to make extracts from such a paper, but the following sentences we must make room for:—

"Mazzini was an ardent Theist. Without religion, without faith in God, and the habit of regarding all nature and the whole course of humanity as a manifestation of God, the world, he believed, was rotten, and life a ghastly farce. His favourite word for the opposite way of thinking, and for all mere acquiescence in customary religion without real belief, was materialism. This word, which he pronounced in his cutting Italian way (*matèrrialism*) was his constant name of reprobation for a great many men whose mental power he acknowledged. It was the counterpart spiritually and intellectually of Individualism and Machiavellism in practice, and the world was full of Materialists, Individualists, Machiavellists. The restoration of a real faith in God, and His manifestation through humanity, was the great reform necessary in every nation. All else would follow." . . "In private society Mazzini's habits were simple, kindly, affectionate, and sometimes even playful. He had a good deal of humour, and could tell a story, or hit off a character very shrewdly and graphically, not omitting the grotesque points. There was a respectful tenderness in his manner towards women, which never interfered with the frankness he thought due to them on account of that theory of the rightful political equality of the sexes which he always advocated. Perhaps he was most happily seen, even by men, when one or more of several highly-gifted ladies who knew him thoroughly, and made his comfort their study, were present to preside and regulate, and keep off the troublesome, and make the surroundings congenial and domestic. Either so, in a varied group round a fireside, or joining in a game of cards at a table, or else more apart and smoking his cigar with one or two selected for that companionship, he was very ready to talk. The talk on such occasions was good, utterly unpedantic, about this or that, as it happened, and often with whim and laughter."

The *Congregationalist* keeps up well, and is busy on its special topics. The first place is this time given to a discussion of the Scotch Education Bill, in which are powerfully exhibited the absurdity and practical injustice of that clause empowering school boards to levy a rate for schools in which religious instruction is to be given. Dr. Allon sends an admirably clear yet warm-hearted homily on "The Power of Intercession." Mr. Gledstone contributes an interesting and suggestive paper on "The Secret of Whitefield's Preaching," though we are not quite sure that, with all his special knowledge, he has grasped all the secret. "The Distinction between the 'Kingdom' and the 'Church,'" is a vigorous, clear-sighted article; and then follows a very sensible essay on "The Music of Congregational "Churches." The close following of the organ produces monotony; the organ should follow the congregation, and not the congregation the organ; the *congregation* should sing, and the choir should be merely a constituent part of the congregation. There is no instrument like the living voice, and "no music touches "the heart like that from a multitude of singers." There is also a very incisive article on the debate on Mr. Dixon's resolutions, such as we are always glad to see. The *Congregationalist*, in presenting such papers, is doing a signal service; and certainly this number falls behind none of its predecessors.

In the *Art Journal* for June we note, besides the specialities referred to last month, a paper on "Rome: "its Art Doings and Prospects at the Present Time" —there are, it seems, quite a multitude of studios of foreign artists in the Italian capital—a description of the fine picture-gallery of Mr. G. Fox, of Alderley; and various papers on germane subjects liberally illustrated. Two of the steel engravings are from the collection of the proprietor of the *Art Journal*; "Cherries Ripe," a lively character study by a Belgian artist; and Mr. G. Pope's "Accident or Design"—a humorous park scene, where the relative positions and airs of a young gallant and fashionable lady tell their own story. "Cupid "Cruising among the Water-lilies" is an exquisite line engraving from a highly-fanciful sculpture work.

Golden Hours a little lacks variety. Mr. Heath continues his excellent sketches among the English peasantry, being this month with "The Kentish "Wagoner." A lady contributes an excellent paper on "Work in a Girls' School," and Mr. Pelham Dale has a good article on "Christ and Womanhood"—a capital theme. Mrs. Paull has some good touches in "Trevor Court," but we are not so much taken with Sir Eger de Valence.

Old Merry goes along with spirit, in spite of his years, and does not mean to be beaten by his young rivals. Mr. Ballantyne's "Jarwin and Cuffy" is dashing, and is quite the thing for youngsters; Mrs. Eiloart's "Boy with an Idea" is full of good sense and a mild humour; and Miss Zimmern gives an interesting version of "How Thor was deceived by the Giants." The other articles are all good and suitable, especially "An Adventure in an Ice-field."

Kind Words is not quite so dashing, but it is edited with close regard to the tastes and feelings of the young. Sarah Doudney gets along excellently in "Wave upon "Wave," and the editor's continuation of "Pounceford "Hall" is as good as the first part, and that is saying a good deal in its favour. The other papers are all, in various way and degrees, good and suitable.

The *Evangelical Magazine* has a fair number. The Rev. Robt. Ferguson on the Foundation of Religious Belief is a thoughtful paper. "J. S. E.'s" essays are sensible, and weighted with reflection. Mr. Lyon's "The Bible and Evolution" seizes some good points, and puts them powerfully; and Mr. Andw. Reed's "Notes on Faraday" are most readable and interesting. There is a good steel portrait of Dr. Wm. Pulsford of Glasgow.

The *Christian Treasury* goes in a good deal for selection, giving pages of gems from the old writers. These are well chosen, always. Dr. Bonar, too, himself gives in almost every number a hymn of his own, and here we have one set to music—a hymn for Easter. "Science and Scripture," by Mr. Brodie, of Monimail, is good as usual, but now and again he assumes too much. On the whole, the magazine keeps up well.

The *Bible-Class and Youth's Magazine* and the *Sunday-School Teacher* are both full of instructive items, suited for those for whom they are intended. —*The Children's Friend* has excellent illustrations, and now and then a really capital story, such as the present "Babes in the Basket," in which we hear of the fidelity of an ayah, or Indian maid, to her master's children. "Victoria the Beloved" is a nice little song for children, well set to music.—We can only mention in a word the *Family Friend*, also well illustrated, the *Children's Magazine*, the *Biblical Treasury*, and *Notes on Scripture Lessons*, which two latter are full of valuable information.

BRIEF NOTICES.

The second volume of the library edition of Mr. Tennyson's poems (Strahan and Co.) has nothing new. It contains the rest of the miscellaneous poems included in the volume of "Poems," the whole contents of the *Enoch Arden* volume, and *Lucretius*. It is, like the first one, a very admirable specimen of printing and general get-up—every way a handsome edition.—The *National Thanksgiving*, by A. P. Stanley, Dean of Westminster (Macmillan), contains three sermons preached in Westminster Abbey in connection with the illness of the Prince of Wales. They are touched with something more than the Dean's usual intensity, reflecting the depth of feeling awakened in the general heart by the events of that time. The last sermon concludes with a very expressive appeal for the completion of St. Paul's Cathedral in connection with the Thanksgiving. The sermons sufficiently justify what Dean Stanley says in the preface. "Many other discourses may "have expressed more directly the individual feelings of "the preacher. In a large, mixed congregation like that "assembled in Westminster Abbey, it seemed more fitting "to speak of the general topics which would remain after "the immediate occasion had passed, but which from "this occasion derived a force that could not otherwise "have been attained."—*Sermon Notes*, by Edward Vaux, M.A. (Palmer), will doubtless prove useful to those for whom they are intended—"the younger clergy and those "of riper age who may not find it handy to prepare for "the pulpit;"—but we had fancied that with the sermon market so open and well patronised, no one who had in view the improvement of preaching would have thus endeavoured to render earnest preparation too easy or in great part unnecessary.—In the *Close of the Times of the Gentiles*, the Rev. W. Wingate (Nisbet) has given us a new interpretation of those obscure prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse, which we have come to the conclusion that it would be as well to let alone, at least, so far as forcing upon them a direct reference to present-day events is concerned. So many have tried to invent a plausible explanation, and establish dates, and time has falsified them all. Mr. Wingate is laborious and ingenious; but we cannot put any weight on his theory, with its identifications of the Roman Empire, and the Roman Church, and so on, with those wondrous symbolisms, which it strikes us should be contemplated as moving on a higher plane of meaning.—*Morning and Evening Walks with the Prophet Jeremiah*, by the Rev. D. Pledge (Marlborough and Co.), is a series of short, simple meditations on themes from the Book of Jeremiah, very suitable for Sunday reading.—*Concise Answers to Four Thousand Scripture Questions* (Bagster) is a careful compilation, calculated to be very useful to teachers and parents generally. As Scripture references are systematically given, the work is, of course, all the more satisfactory and complete.—*Missionary Enterprise no Fiction* (Elliot Stock) is interesting in its way, but we confess the ingenuity it displays seems to us directed to a wrong object. Nothing could possibly speak more powerfully for missionary enterprise than the facts themselves speak, and here we have them dressed up, and disguised in a manner that does not add to their real effect. As a piece of fiction, the work has its strong points, which we do not desire to ignore; but we cannot urge the writer to repeat his experiment.—The *History of the Sandwich Islands*, by the Rev. Rufus Anderson, D.D., LL.D. (Hodder and Stoughton), bears us out fully in

what we have said above. Nothing could be more interesting than this narrative of actual facts. There is no literary garnishing, no aim at effect; and yet the work is fascinating simply from its reality and veracity. Dr. Anderson had been for upwards of forty years in connection with the American Board of Foreign Missions; and, after retiring from active work in 1866, he devoted himself to mission literature. This is his second work. It is written with care and with subdued enthusiasm, and is well worthy of the highest rank in mission literature. Few men have done better service after having retired from a lifetime of official work.

The Training Schools under Government Inspection, 1870-71. (Birmingham: Printed for the National Education League, 1872.) This is a noteworthy pamphlet on a most important, we might say an ominous, subject. It presents in a succinct and convenient form all the facts of the case, and we earnestly commend it to the study of our readers. They will find from these pages that even on the extravagant estimate put forth by the Government as to the capacity of the present training colleges, these are utterly inadequate to meet the certain demand which will shortly be made. And if the question be asked how a further supply of teachers is to be obtained, the illustrations given in this pamphlet of the sort of instruction furnished in the present institutions will, if we mistake not, suggest some fatal objections to an extension of the present system. What have the teachers of our national schools to do with questions such as the following?—

"In the ordering of Priests, what are the chief questions asked of the candidates for such orders?"

"What does the Bishop say is the chief duty of a Deacon?"

"Give a comparative account of the three creeds. When are they respectively appointed to be used?"

"Relate the miracle of our Lord, in which the legion of devils was cast out into the herd of swine. What are we to learn from this latter event?"

We respectfully suggest that from "this latter event" we might learn the mischief which sometimes ensues from an incongruous admixture of things spiritual and carnal.

China's Place in Philology. An Attempt to Show that the Languages of Europe and Asia had a Common Origin. By Joseph Edkins, B.A., of the London Missionary Society, Pekin. (Trübner and Co.) Mr. Edkins makes no secret of his purpose in the publication of his learned, interesting and painstaking work. He knows that there is an influential class of philologists who will have it that human language must be referred to a plurality of origins, distinct and separate each from the other. The nature of his belief in Scripture is such that he shrinks from a theory which appears to him to contradict and, to a certain extent, to imperil the utterances of the Word of God. He also thinks that it is quite possible to reconcile Scripture with science in a satisfactory way, and that, in the interests of both, this should be done. To any one who knows the present condition of philological science, and we may also say, the present temper of many of the prominent students of that science, the task Mr. Edkins has undertaken must appear very arduous, venturesome, and even rash. To certain critics it will be matter for almost unbounded amusement, that any one in these days should seriously maintain that, according to Scripture, all men once spoke a common language. Amusement, however, is not argument; and we affirm that, altogether apart from the wide-spread sympathy which Mr. Edkin's purpose will necessarily evoke in all devout as well as thoughtful people, he has written a book in support of a view which he so well defends at almost every step, that the wisest readers will feel the best thing they can do is give it their best attention. Necessarily, the public to which the writer addresses himself is a very limited one. Few English readers know anything of Chinese, and not many of them would feel competent to decide on any of the numerous points in discussion. Still, it would be a mistake to suppose that the book before us is without interest to general readers. The introductory chapters, for instance, instituting a comparison between Chinese civilisation and religion with those of Western Asia, are full of important points, deserving the attention of all who love to study the manifold moral history of the race. For ourselves, we are thankful to Mr. Edkins for his book, and we congratulate the society under whose auspices he labours.

The Royal Academy Exhibition will open May 3, and close July 31.

An exhibition of ancient and modern jewellery and personal ornaments will be opened at the South Kensington Museum in June next. At the head of the committee of management is the name of the Princess Louise.

Messrs. Blackwood and Sons will publish in May, a volume of short poems by Mr. Alfred Austin bearing the title of "Interludes."

The Metropolitan Board of Works have decided to re-name Oakley-square, Chelsea, and to call it henceforward "Carlyle-square."

Vegetarian Enthusiasm.—M. Gleizès was during forty years a rabid and uncompromising enemy of meat. He published several volums to advocate, or rather celebrate, the *régime des herbes*. J. J. Rousseau was a little on his side, but he did not unite the practice with his theory; whereas M. Gleizès was in solemn earnest, and separated from a wife whom he loved solely because she evinced an unconquerable predilection for flesh and fowl. —*Food Journal*.

Miscellaneous.

The Jamaica Committee.—The *Daily News* states that the Government having announced its intention to submit the proposed vote for ex-Governor Eyre's legal expenses to the House of Commons, the Jamaica Committee, which, although not formally dissolved, had held no meetings for two years, was revived on Friday. It was decided to give the most active support to Mr. Bowring's motion for the rejection of the vote.

The Tichborne Case.—In the Central Criminal Court on Monday, Sir Thomas Chambers, the Deputy Recorder, told the grand jury that very probably the "Claimant" would, in addition to the accusation of perjury, be charged with forgery in issuing bonds in the name of Sir Roger Tichborne. In the course of the day Mr. Montagu Williams, one of the defendant's counsel, applied to be furnished with a copy of the indictment upon which he was to be tried. The Judge said he was informed that a bill was to be presented next day, and if it was "found" the defendant would have a copy of the indictment.

Shocking Murder in Park-lane.—A dreadful murder was committed on Monday at No. 13, Park-lane, the victim being Madame Maria Caroline Besson Riel, a French lady, forty-two years of age. From the facts at present in possession of the police, it would appear that the unfortunate lady was strangled through the agency of a thick knotted cord, and that her dead body was dragged from the coal-cellar into the pantry, where it was found. Suspicion attaches to the cook, one Marguerite Beiblanes, who has absconded, and at the same time a large sum of money is missing from the house.

The Outrage on the Queen.—At the Central Criminal Court yesterday afternoon, the lad O'Connor was placed at the bar, and although it was previously understood that he would be defended, and indeed, the fact had been positively stated, when the indictment was read over to him he pleaded guilty to the charge. The prisoner was dressed in the same way as when he appeared at the police-court. He looked round the court in rather a confident manner, and said he was guilty in a loud voice. The Deputy Recorder directed the prisoner to stand down until to-morrow (Thursday) morning, when he will be brought up for judgment. The result was quite unexpected to every one connected with the court. The counsel for the Crown were the Attorney-General, Mr. Poland, and Mr. Archibald. The prisoner was to have been defended by Mr. Hume Williams, instructed by a firm of solicitors, who had been engaged by a committee of gentleman for the defendant.

The French Commercial Treaty.—The official correspondence relating to the Anglo-French Commercial Treaty has been published. It extends from June 13, 1871, to March 25, 1872. As late as the 7th of February last, the French Foreign Minister expressed the wish of his Government to avoid the denunciation of the treaty. Earl Granville replied that he was ready to resume negotiations, but saw no prospect of a settlement by discussing the original proposals of the French Government. After some further correspondence with respect to the differential duties and the new Marine Mercantile Law, the treaty was denounced, Earl Granville expressing the hope that the stipulations of the treaty would be strictly observed whilst it remained in force. He also preferred remonstrances respecting the duties on mineral oils, the proceedings of the Customs authorities, and the Marine Mercantile Law.

Agricultural Children.—Mr. Clare Read has laid before the House of Commons a bill proposing to enact that it shall not be lawful for any employer occupying not less than one acre, or his agent, to employ "in the execution of any kind of agricultural work" a child under the age of eight years, nor a child above eight and under twelve unless the parent or guardian has obtained a certificate that the child, if under ten, completed 250 school attendances in the preceding year, or 150 if the child be above ten; but there will be no penalty incurred if there was no elementary school open which the child could have attended within two miles by the nearest road from its residence. The penalty for an offence against this Act is not to exceed 5*l.* in the case of an employer or agent, nor 1*l.* if he be any other person. If the child is employed on the representation of his parent or guardian, and under the belief in good faith that he was a duly certificated child, or above the age of thirteen years, the employer or agent will not be, but the parent will be, guilty of an offence. A court of summary jurisdiction may, if it thinks fit, upon the application of a person or persons occupying not less than 500 acres of land in the district within the jurisdiction of such court, issue a notice suspending the restrictions within such district for a period or periods not exceeding six weeks in any one year. The bill also proposes to enact that no child under the age of ten years shall be employed in any agricultural gang; at present it is allowed at the age of eight years.

Tamworth Election.—A meeting of Nonconformists to consider their duties in relation to the Parliamentary election for the borough was held on Monday night in the Congregational Schoolroom. Ministers and representatives from every denomination in Tamworth were present, and the Rev. J. J. Brown and Mr. F. Schnadhorst attended by invitation from the Central Nonconformist Committee. The following resolutions were unanimously adopted:—

1. That in the opinion of this meeting the time has arrived when Nonconformists should refuse to support any candidate who will not pledge himself to vote for the amendment of the Education Act and the thorough application of the principles of religious equality; and this meeting further pledges itself not to support any candidate for the representation of Tamworth who will not give satisfactory assurances on these points.

2. That a deputation be now appointed to wait upon Sir Spencer Robinson to ascertain his views upon the principles embodied in the previous resolution, and that the Rev. J. J. Brown and Mr. Schnadhorst be requested to accompany the deputation.

A large deputation was at once appointed, who at once waited upon Sir Spencer Robinson at his hotel, where they were courteously received. The resolutions of the meeting having been read, and addresses delivered in support of them, Sir Spencer Robinson in reply accepted without reserve the principle laid down by the deputation as to the responsibility of the State with regard to secular education and of the Church in regard to religious education, and affirmed his willingness if returned to Parliament to support any measure for carrying this principle into effect, promising specially to support Mr. Candlish's motion for the repeal of the 25th Clause. Admiral Robinson further promised to support Mr. Miall's forthcoming motion for a commission of inquiry into the revenues of the Established Church. The deputation expressed themselves much gratified with the frankness of the admiral's statements. The contest is likely to be very close. The publicans have unanimously decided to support the Conservative candidate, Mr. R. W. Hanbury, although hitherto many of them have been among the most active supporters of the Liberal party.

Gleanings.

Great injury was done to fruit trees about London, more especially pears, by the recent frost, although externally the flowers looked none the worse.

At the recent examination for teacher's certificates, the word "Irony," from Dryden's *Æneid* was given for students to explain. One of them supplied the following: "Irony, a substance found in mineral wells; it is carefully preserved in bottles and sold in chemists' shops as tincture of iron."

Novel Advertisement.—At a late masquerade ball at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, one young lady's dress was composed entirely of newspapers, the *Daily Observer* being the journal thus honoured and adorned. Another young lady appeared at an evening party at Rock Island, Illinois, with her dress flounced with copies of the *Argus* newspaper, her waist being spanned with the title head of that journal.—*American Paper*.

George the Third.—King George III. having knighted a gentleman of the name of Day at a *levée* held on the 29th of September, said, "Now I know that I am a King, for I have turned *Day* into *Knight*, and have made Lady Day at Michaelmas." On one occasion when His Majesty came out of the House of Lords after opening the session, he said to the Lord Chancellor, "Did I deliver the speech well?" Very well indeed," was the reply. "I am glad of that," said the King, "for there was nothing in it." Old George had no dislike to the theatre; but he did not admire Shakespeare, nor, indeed, was tragedy to his taste. The pantomime was the thing for him. And when the clown swallowed three yards of black pudding, his hilarity became so uproarious that the Queen had to admonish him to moderate the transports of his mirth.

Births, Marriages, and Deaths.

BIRTHS.

HOWAT.—March 27, at 1, Pellatt-grove, Wood Green, the wife of the Rev. George R. Howat, B.A., of a daughter.

MARRIAGES.

SOMERTON—SHAW.—March 26, at the Congregational Church, Penzance, by the father of the bride, assisted by Rev. R. G. Williams, Mr. George Somerton, Chemist, Torquay, only son of the late Mr. Thomas Somerton, of Bedford House, Clevedon, to Mary Helen, elder daughter of the Rev. Samuel Shaw, late of Clevedon, Somerset.

THATCHER—ROBERTS.—March 25, at the Baptist Chapel, Shortwood, by the Rev. W. T. Price, George, son of Mr. John Thatcher, of Redhill, Wrington, Somerset, to Elizabeth, youngest daughter of Mr. Samuel Roberts, of Watledge, Nailsworth, Gloucestershire.

DEATHS.

OSBORNE—March 29, Ann, the beloved wife of Mr. Samuel Osborne, of Church Green, Marden, Kent, in the 90th year of her age.

Kinahan's LL Whisky.—This celebrated and most delicious old mellow spirit is the very cream of Irish Whiskies, in quality unrivalled, perfectly pure, and more wholesome than the finest Cognac Brandy. Note the words "Kinahan's LL," on seal, label and cork. Wholesale Depot, 6A, Great Titchfield-street, Oxford-street, W.

Holloway's Pills.—When emerging from the winter and entering on spring, it is a wise and wholesome precaution to purify and cool the system by some alterative competent to regulate disordered actions and to strengthen while it cleanses. This long-sought medicine exists in Holloway's far-famed purifying and tonic Pills, which costs only a trifle, and will ward off serious illnesses, which too frequently reduce competency to poverty, enjoyment to misery. This medicine, so innocent in its nature and so searching in its operation, is suitable for all ages and both sexes. It is especially adapted for soldiers and sailors, and is an indispensable requisite for colonists and persons proceeding to foreign countries, where climates harass the constitution.

Markets.

CORN EXCHANGE, MARK LANE, Monday, April 8.

The supplies of wheat since Monday have been small. We have to report only a retail trade at late prices for both English and foreign wheat. Barley sells slowly at late rates. Beans and peas are the turn lower. Arrivals of oats are small, but the inquiry was not active this morning, and prices are rather in favour of buyers. Arrivals of cargoes off coast have been few, and but few sales have been made. Prices remain the same as last week. Indian corn barely supported last week's prices.

CURRENT PRICES.

	Per Qr. s.	s.
WHEAT—		
Essex and Kent, red	—	to —
Ditto new	49	to 54
White	—	—
„ new	55	59
Foreign red	52	54
„ white	56	57
BARLEY—		
English malting	29	31
Chevalier	36	41
Distilling	29	33
Foreign	26	30
MALT—		
Pale	—	—
Chevalier	—	—
Brown	51	56
BEANS—		
Ticks	30	32
Harrow	33	34
Small	—	—
Egyptian	30	31
PEAS—		
Grey	32	to 33
Maple	36	38
White	36	40
Boilers	36	40
Foreign	36	40
RYE—	36	38
OATS—		
English feed	21	24
„ potato	26	32
Scotch feed	—	—
„ potato	—	—
Irish Black	18	20
„ White	18	21
Foreign feed	16	18
FLOUR—		
Town made	45	5
Best country households	39	42
Norfolk & Suffolk	37	38

BREAD, Monday, April 8.—The prices in the Metropolis are, for Wheaten Bread, per 4 lbs. loaf, 7½d. to 8d.; Household Bread, 6½d. to 7d.

METROPOLITAN CATTLE MARKET, Monday, April 8.—The total imports of foreign stock into London last week amounted to 15,774 head. In the corresponding week in 1871 we received 12,736; in 1870, 6,421; in 1869, 10,496; and in 1868, 4,191 head. Owing to the heaviness in the dead meat market, and to the mild weather, the cattle trade to-day has been in a depressed state. About an average supply of stock has been on sale, and the quality generally has been good. As regards beasts, the receipt from our grazing districts have been tolerably good, but those from abroad have been short. In all breeds sales have progressed slowly, and the demand has been heavy. The best Scots and crosses have made 5s. to 5s. 2d., per 8lbs. From Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, and Cambridgeshire we received about 1,750 Scots and crosses; from other parts of England 250 various breeds; from Scotland, 155 Scots and crosses, and from Ireland about 100 oxen. There has been a good supply of sheep in the pens. Sales have progressed slowly, and prices have been in favour of buyers. The best Downs and half-breds, in the wool, have sold at 7s. to 7s. 2d.; ditto, shorn, 5s. 10d. to 6s. per 8lbs. Lambs have been in limited request, at from 8s. 6d. to 9s. 4d. per 8lbs. Calves have changed hands slowly, and the demand for pigs has ruled heavy.

Per 8lbs., to sink the offal.

	s. d.	s. d.		s. d.	s. d.
Inf. coarse beasts	2 10	to 3 6	Prime Southdown	7 0	7 2
Second quality	3 8	4 2	Lge coarse calves	4 6	5 2
Prime large oxen	4 4	4 10	Prime small	5 4	6 0
Prime Scots	5 0	5 2	Large hogs	3 8	4 4
Coarse inf. sheep	4 6	5 2	Neat sm. porkers	4 6	5 0
Second quality	5 6	6 2	Lamb	8 6	9 4
Pr. coarse wooled	6 6	6 10			

METROPOLITAN MEAT MARKET, Monday, April 8.—Fair supplies have been on offer. The trade has been quieter at our quotations. The imports into London last week consisted of 7 packages from Harlingen, 90 qrs. 744 packages from Hamburg, and 1 basket from Rotterdam.

Per 8lbs. by the carcase.

	s. d.	s. d.		s. d.	s. d.
Inferior beef	3 4	to 3 8	Middling do.	4 6	to 5 0
Middling do.	3 10	4 2	Prime do.	5 4	5 10
Prime large do.	4 2	4 4	Large pork	3 6	4 0
Prime small do.	4 8	4 10	Small do.	4 2	4 10
Veal	5 0	5 8	Lamb	8 0	8 8
Inferior Mutton	4 0	4 4			

PROVISIONS, Monday, April 8.—The arrivals last week from Ireland were 533 firkins butter and 3,915 bales bacon; and from foreign ports 20,252 packages butter, and 620 bales bacon. Irish butter moves off slowly at most irregular prices. Foreign is lower, even for the finest qualities. Best Dutch 126s. to 130s. per cwt. Bacon has sold well, and the market closed very firm, with tendency to higher prices. Lard in fair request.

COVENT GARDEN MARKET, Saturday, April 6.—A general dullness seems to have settled on the business here, and very few profitable transactions are realised just now; there are ample supplies of outdoor produce to hand, which barely make last week's quotations. From under glass hot-house grapes are offered in limited quantities, but strawberries and cucumbers are beyond the requirements of the trade.

HOPS.—BOROUGH, Monday, April 8.—During the past week the market has been quiet, although a slightly better business has been effected in English hops of the last growth, which are now drawn within a very small compass. Prices show no improvement. Finer sorts of yearlings are in fair request, and full rates are paid, this class being extremely scarce. The Alost markets exhibit a slight tendency to decline. Choice Poperinghes are firm; lower sorts are easier. Mid and East Kent, 10*l.* 10s., 12*l.* 12s., to 17*l.*; Weald, 8*l.* 10s., 9*l.* 9s., to 10*l.* 10s.; Sussex, 7*l.* 15s., 8*l.* 8s., to 9*l.* 9s.; Farnham and country, 11*l.* 11s., 13*l.* to 16*l.* Yearlings—Mid and East Kent, 3*l.*, 4*l.* 4s., to 6*l.* 10s.; Weald of Kent, 3*l.*, 4*l.*, to 5*l.* 15s.; Sussex, 3*l.*, 3*l.* 10s., to 5*l.* 5s.; Farnham and country, 6*l.*, to 7*l.*; Old, 1*l.* 5s., 1*l.* 10s., to 2*l.*

POTATOES.—BOROUGH AND SPITALFIELDS, Monday, April 8.—The markets have been moderately supplied with potatoes. The demand has been more active, at our quotations. The imports into London last week consisted of 72 tons from St. Malo, Dunkirk 66, and 54 from Jersey. Regents, 85s. to 125s. per ton; Rocks, 80s. to 95s. per ton; Flukes, 100s. to 140s. per ton; Victorias, 95s. to 140s. per ton

SEED, Monday, April 8.—There was a moderate supply of English red cloverseed, which commanded high prices with a better sale, and fine samples of American were fully as dear, and taken off in small lots more freely. White seed supported prices steadily. Choice new trefoil realised about former rates; but old and low qualities could be bought under late prices. The best parcels of canaryseed brought rather more money, with a fair sale. Large hempseed sold at quite as high rates. White mustardseed was purchased for sowing rather more freely. English linseed more inquired for, and, being scarce, was rather dearer. Tares met rather more inquiry, but, being abundant, importers met the buyers readily, and accepted lower prices generally.

WOOL, Saturday, April 8.—The wool market has been quiet for all qualities; the demand has been inactive, and the actual business concluded has been very moderate; fine parcels, however, have been steady in value, holders not being anxious to press sales; other sorts have been drooping.

OIL, Saturday, April 8.—Linseed oil has been quiet, at late rates. Rape has been quiet. For other oils the demand has been limited.

TALLOW, Monday, April 8.—The market has been quiet. Y. C., spot, new 42s., old 47s. 6d. per cwt. Town tallow, 42s. 6d. net cash.

COAL, Monday, April 8.—Market without alteration from last day. Hettons Wallsend, 21s.; Hettons South, 20s. 9d.; Hettons Lyons, 19s. 3d.; Hawthorn, 19s.; Holywell Main, 20s. 6d. Ships fresh arrived, 31; left from last day, 1; total, 32. Ships at sea, 5.

Advertisements.

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Illustrated Prospectus and Samples of Work sent post free.

MORNINGTON CHURCH, HAMPSTEAD-ROAD.

The Rev. MARK WILKS will Preach on SUNDAY, April 14th. Service at Eleven. And on SUNDAY, April 21st, the Rev. GEO. A. PROCTOR will Commence his Ministry in this Church.

SITE for a CHAPEL.—To be LET on LEASE, or the Freehold will be Sold, the best uncovered site for a chapel in Stoke Newington. Situate on the Stoke Newington Park Estate, lying between Park-lane and Green-lanes.—For particulars apply to Mr. Peyton Dashwood, 75, Mark-lane, E.C., between twelve and one o'clock.

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.

The Twenty-seventh ANNUAL MEETING will be held (D.V.) in EXETER HALL, TUESDAY EVENING, April 16, 1872.

The Right Hon. the EARL of SHAFTESBURY, K.G., will preside.

The Rev. Robert Moffat, D.D., the veteran African missionary; the Rev. William Cadman, M.A., rector of Trinity, St. Marylebone; the Rev. William Brock, D.D., of Bloomsbury; the Rev. Gervase Smith, M.A., of Highbury; and the Rev. Hugh Hanna, Presbyterian Church, Belfast, will take part in the proceedings.

The doors will be opened at Seven, and the meeting will commence at half-past Seven.

Tickets to be had of James Nisbet and Co., 21, Berners-street, Oxford-street; Bull's Library, 52, Wigmore-street, Cavendish-square; Dalton and Lucy, 28, Cockspur-street; Westerton, Knightsbridge; Waters, 97, Westbourne-grove; Warren Hall and Co., 88, Camden-road; Burdekin, 97, Upper-street, Islington; Alvey, 119, Newington-causeway; the Book Society, 28, Paternoster-row; Williams and Lloyd, 29, Moorgate-street; Kitto, 5, Bishopsgate-street Without; and at the Offices of the Association, 165, Aldersgate-street.

EVANGELICAL CONTINENTAL SOCIETY.

The Committee have much pleasure in announcing that the Rev. R. S. Ashton, B.A., Weymouth, has, at their earnest request, accepted the Secretaryship of the Society.

Contributions for the spread of the Gospel in France, Belgium, Spain, Italy, Bohemia, &c., &c., are greatly needed, and will be thankfully received at the office by the Secretary.

JOHN CROSSLEY, Esq., J.P., Treasurer.
E. PYE-SMITH, Esq., Sub-Treasurer.
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MIDLAND RAILWAY.—THIRD-CLASS PASSENGERS by all TRAINS.—On and after MONDAY, April 1st, the Midland Railway Company will book and convey Passengers at Third-class (Parliamentary) Fares, by all Trains, over all parts of their system, including Manchester and Liverpool; also, to Stations on the LANCASHIRE and YORKSHIRE, MANCHESTER, SHEFFIELD, and LINCOLNSHIRE, NORTH-EASTERN, FURNESS, and NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE RAILWAYS, and SCOTLAND.

JAMES ALLPORT, General Manager.
Derby, March, 1872.

STROUD LADIES' COLLEGE, BEECHES' GREEN, STROUD, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

Principals—The Misses HOWARD.

SECOND TERM will BEGIN THURSDAY, May 2nd.

The London Orphan Asylum, Clapton.—The Freehold of this highly important and very valuable Estate, comprising the noble Building so well known as one of the ornaments of this district, with its handsome Chapel, modern detached Residence, beautifully planted Lawn, and ample Recreation Grounds, occupying together about seven acres, admirably adapted for any kindred object, for an hospital, for a public or private asylum, or for a great educational establishment, having also facilities for the proper development of part of the land.

MESSRS. EDWIN FOX and BOUSFIELD are directed to SELL by AUCTION, at the MART, Tokenhouse-yard, Bank of England, on WEDNESDAY, April 24, at two precisely, the FREEHOLD of the unparalleled and pre-eminently valuable ESTATE, at Clapton, lately vacated by the London Orphan Asylum, consisting of the noble and substantial building, plain, but commanding in its elevation, consisting of a handsome centre block, with two extensive wings, united by a colonnade on either side of the chapel, upwards of £40,000 having been judiciously expended on the erections, which are replete with every possible appliance conducive to the successful management of a large establishment. The estate occupies about seven acres of land, has three commanding and important frontages, that to the high road being about 430 feet, and to the other roads about 1,100 feet, it thus offers great facilities for utilising so much of the ground as may not be required for occupation with the building, and thus, by the creation of freehold ground rents, to secure a present income with the great prospective advantages in reversion. The structure is admirably adapted for educational purposes, and its position, twenty minutes from the City, and in direct communication by the North London Railway with all the populous northern and eastern suburbs, points to its eligibility for a large middle-class school, the great desideratum of these rising districts, as it would readily afford accommodation for 1,500 day scholars; while for any other purpose, notably an hospital, asylum, or public institution, it is equally suited.—May be viewed by orders only, obtainable of the Auctioneers. Particulars, with plans, may be obtained of Messrs. Winter, Williams, and Co., Solicitors, 16, Bedford-road; at the Mart; and of Messrs. Edwin Fox and Bousfield, 24, Gresham-street-Bank, E.C.

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Sir,—I beg to state that the chloralum powder and solution have been largely employed in this city, and with the most complete success.

The bed of the River Liffey, which emitted a very offensive odour during the recent warm weather, was most satisfactorily disinfected by chloralum powder at the rate of only one pound per 25 square feet.

I have found it most efficacious as a purifier of stables, and I use it constantly in my own house. Altogether, I may say of chloralum that it is a very valuable sanitary agent, and one which is certain to come into general use.

I remain, your obedient servant,
CHAS. A. CAMERON, M.D.,
Professor of Hygiene, Royal College of Surgeons, and Analyst of the City of Dublin.

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Hospitals	Cowsheds
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Chloralum Powder is not caustic or hurtful in any way, and although it absorbs moisture, it does not deteriorate by keeping.

Casks, 1 cwt., for 15s., and in 6d. and 1s. packets.

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The English studies are under the immediate direction of the Misses Miall and competent Governesses.

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Miss DIXIE, who has succeeded her Aunt, Miss Fletcher, in the Establishment which she so long and successfully conducted, will continue to RECEIVE YOUNG LADIES as Resident and Daily Pupils.

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The EASTER TERM will COMMENCE April 25th.

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Lord Francis Conyngham, who this time last year bought some of Dr. Collis Browne's Chlorodyne from Mr. Davenport and has found it a most wonderful medicine, will be glad to have half-a-dozen bottles sent at once to the above address.

*** Earl Russell communicated to the College of Physicians that he had received a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Manilla, to the effect that Cholera has been raging fearfully, and that the ONLY remedy of any service was CHLORODYNE.—See *Lancet,* Dec. 31, 1864.

CAUTION.—BEWARE OF PIRACY AND IMITATIONS.

Caution.—Vice-Chancellor Sir W. Page Wood stated that Dr. J. Collis Browne was undoubtedly the Inventor of CHLORODYNE; that the story of the Defendant, Freeman, was deliberately untrue, which, he regretted to say, had been sworn to.—See *Times,* 13th July, 1864.

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SUPPLEMENT TO THE NONCONFORMIST.
Wednesday, April 10, 1872.

THE CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT IN THE RURAL PARISHES;

IN RELATION TO RELIGION AND TO NONCONFORMITY.

In a Supplement to the *Nonconformist* of Jan. 3,* we called attention to that passage of the speech of Sir ROUNDELL PALMER, M.P., in the debate on the disestablishment motion of Mr. Miall, M.P., in which he expressed his belief that, "speaking generally, the working "classes in the country are members of the Church, and, through "the Church, they are partakers of benefits of every description, "spiritual, moral, and even temporal;"—affirmed the existence in the rural districts of "multitudes upon multitudes of poor people who "have in them both 'sweetness and light,'" and further stated that he could not "imagine any institution to which this character of "the labouring poor is due more than to that which has placed in "the centre of the population of every part of the country a man "educated and intelligent, whose business it is to do them good; "whose whole and sole business is to take care of their souls, so "far as by God's help he is enabled to do, in every way and in all "circumstances of life, to be their friend and counsellor."

To show how little this roseate picture of the condition of the rural poor corresponds with actual facts, we summarised the contents of the series of "Blue-books" containing the reports of the Royal Commissioners appointed to inquire into the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture. These reports established, beyond all controversy, that a very large proportion of the English rural poor were wretchedly housed, were barbarously ignorant, and were deeply depraved; and, in view of the appalling facts disclosed by the Commissioners, we inquired "if the Establishment is worth "keeping up at so great a cost, not of money only, but of what "is of greater value, when *this* is the condition in which, after "centuries of experience, we find," not particular parishes only, "but whole districts of the country?"

We, at the same time, intimated that these reports by no means stated the whole case against the Establishment, as regards its vaunted utility in the rural districts; for that it was not the business of the Commissioners to inquire into the religious knowledge and habits of the rural population. "If," it was added—

"Another commission were appointed to pursue the inquiry yet further, and if it were possible, by the adoption of similar methods, to ascertain, on the one hand, the exact extent and nature of the machinery provided by the State for promoting the spiritual interests of the people, and, on the other, the product of that machinery, in the lives and characters of the population, we are confident that the question, 'What has the Establishment done for the rural districts?' would receive an answer yet more conclusive than that which can be given to it even now. Whether such information can be obtained, on a large scale, in a less formal and authoritative shape, is perhaps doubtful; but to the extent that it is procurable, it will prove fatal to the pretensions of the Establishment as a means of preventing our village population from lapsing into semi-heathenism or infidelity."

We are now about to present to our readers the results of inquiries of the kind hinted at in the last sentence. They are, we are aware, inquiries which cannot pretend to the authoritativeness of those of the Commissioners. Neither the inquiries, nor the results, have upon them any official stamp, and it will, we know, be easy for those who may object to the conclusions to object also to the methods by which they have been reached. Such an investigation is also attended with another difficulty, in that it relates to matters of a less objective character than those which were referred to the Commissioners—matters in regard to which opinions may differ, according to the religious standpoint of the inquirer; so that different individuals may form a different judgment on the same facts. And, further, we do not profess to have dealt with the subject either completely, in regard to the entire country, or exhaustively, in regard to the various points which it undoubtedly embraces. To have done so would have required months, instead of weeks, and, to make known the results, a volume, instead of a few pages.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks, the information which we now place before our readers has a value which we believe they will not fail to appreciate. It comes from men on whose intelligence and veracity we, at least, place full reliance—who speak of that of which they have personal knowledge—who describe the scenes and the persons among whom they themselves live, and who, however strong their feelings in regard to the Church Establishment, show, by the testimony they bear to the good qualities of its clergy, that they are not blinded by passion or by prejudice. So far as the particular portions of the country described are concerned, they have been determined, not by arbitrary selection, but by accidental circumstances. We have had exceptional facilities for becoming acquainted with the condition of the population in some parishes, or counties; while, in the case of others, the requisite witnesses have not been forthcoming. So far as we have succeeded in throwing any light on the religious state of the people in certain parts of England, we believe that we have but furnished illustrations of the state of things which exists in other parts also. If there are whole districts of which nothing is said in these pages, it is not, we believe, because they materially differ from the districts which *are* described, but simply because we are not in the possession of the facts which relate to them. All that we now present is—like the reports of the Royal Commissioners on another branch of the subject—but "a contribution towards the materials out "of which a judgment as to the working of the Establishment must "be formed." Other materials may be accumulated, and those who approve of the method which we have pursued, with the facilities at our command, cannot show their appreciation of it in a better way than by themselves pursuing the same method, in respect to those portions of the country with which they are themselves acquainted. It is admitted that this Establishment question is likely to be settled on practical, rather than on theoretical grounds, and, as the upholders of the existing system have chosen to stake all on the plea of practical utility, their own test should be applied with unsparin rigour.

It may, perhaps, occasion disappointment in some quarters that, in most cases, names, places, and dates are omitted in our statements. The omission is intentional, and for reasons the weight of which will not be denied. We wish simply to establish certain conclusions, and not to excite ill-feeling against individuals; or to originate local controversies, or personal quarrels. The information which is advisedly withheld might gratify curiosity, but would probably, in some cases, be the means of inflicting additional suffering on those who already sufficiently suffer for their attachment to Nonconformist principles; while its absence does not materially detract from the importance of the facts themselves.

I.—RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF RURAL PARISHES.

Some of the readers of Mr. NOEL'S Essay on the union of Church and State will remember those pungent passages, in which, in describing the influence of the union on the evangelisation of the country, he says:—

We have seen what reason there is to fear that thousands of incumbents are unconverted men, who enter the ministry for worldly considerations, who do not understand the Gospel, who dislike the evangelical ministers of their neighbourhood, who support no evangelical institutions, who indulge in worldly amusements, who neglect their parishes, and over whom neither the Government nor the bishops exercise any effectual superintendence. Their parishes, for the most part, remain profoundly ignorant of the Gospel.

And, after describing the laws which forbid ministers of the Establishment preaching in other parishes without the consent of the incumbents, he adds:—

These laws have done their work. Not a single effort is made by the pious ministers of the Establishment to preach the Gospel extensively to their countrymen. As 6,681 parishes have less than 300 souls in each, robust and educated men spend their energies upon 200 or 300 villagers, with whom, even, as their parishioners are labouring on the farms all day, they have little pastoral intercourse; and leave thousands around them in the deepest ignorance of the Gospel. Not one generous irregularity breaks the deadly calm; not one complaint even interrupts the silence. The parochial system has buried all in slumber, and in view of dying myriads, each minister of the Establishment seems to have adopted the defence of Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Statements more emphatic or more serious than these could not have been made; but they were made by one who, though he had but lately been a clergyman of the Church of England, had become a Dissenter, and was therefore thought by Episcopalians to have indulged in the exaggeration alleged to be common to Dissenters when dealing with the Establishment. But if few clergymen have followed his example as a seceder, several of them have since adopted language quite as strong as his in lamenting the actual condition of the country parishes, and a suspicion of the mischievousness of the parochial principle is evidently beginning to be widely prevalent.

We have—in our Supplement relating to the the rural and physical condition of the village population—already quoted from the Rev. J. C. RYLE, of Stradbroke, a passage which exceeds in strength even that of Mr. NOEL; but we think it right to reproduce it here. It is from his pamphlet on "Church Reform"—which was the best possible reply, by anticipation, to his subsequent tractate entitled, "Disestablishment—What good will it do?"—

It is nonsense to deny that there are scores of large parishes in almost every diocese in England where the parochial clergyman does little or nothing besides a cold formal round of Sunday services. Christ's truth is not preached, soul-work is neglected, the parishioners are like sheep without a shepherd. The bulk of the people never come near the church at all. Sin, and immorality, and ignorance, and infidelity, increase and multiply every year. The few who worship anywhere take refuge in the chapels of Methodists, Baptists, and Independents, if not in more questionable places of worship. The parish church is comparatively deserted. People in such parishes live and die with an abiding impression that the Church of England is a rotten useless institution, and bequeath to their families a legacy of prejudice against the Church, which lasts for ever. Will any one pretend to tell me that there are not hundreds of large English parishes in this condition? I defy him to do so. I am writing down things that are only too true, and it is vain to pretend to conceal them. But what does the Church of England do for such parishes as these? I answer, nothing, nothing at all. It is precisely here that our system fails and breaks down altogether.

Here is a second passage, also from an Evangelical clergyman—the Rev. E. HOARE, M.A., of Tunbridge Wells. Speaking at the Islington Clerical Meeting on the 10th of January, 1865, that gentleman is reported (by the *Record*) to have said:—

He did not know how to express his deep compassion for some of those poor people who lived in villages where there was no Gospel, where there was a cold,

* "The Church Establishment and the Rural Parishes." Copies may still be had, at one penny each.

dead, lifeless ministry, and the only object of the minister was, as he said, to keep things quiet. That quietness, what was it? The stillness of the grave; a deep sleep had fallen upon the people; and when he heard brethren speak of the parochial system as if it were a panacea for all evils, he wondered whether they had been in some of the dark, dead country parishes where the minister was asleep and "the people loved to have it so." Again, there were many parishes where there was real activity and zeal, but a sad absence of the Gospel which was "the power of God unto salvation."

We have quoted these passages with a very definite purpose—for which purpose we place them in the very forefront of the statements which we are about to make respecting the Established Church and the Established clergy in the rural parishes. Those statements will, we quite expect, be declared to be false, calumnious, exaggerated, malignant, and much else besides. But they, virtually, are nothing more than the evidence adducible in support of the heavy indictment already framed by Mr. Ryle, Mr. Hoare, and other equally candid members of the Church of England—an indictment framed in language which for the purpose of such an inquiry we have endeavoured, as far as possible, to avoid. We also think it desirable to let the facts be stated, as far as is consistent with the brevity required, in the words of our informants, who, speaking of localities with which they are familiar, and of individuals of whom they have a personal knowledge, have described both with a degree of vividness and of animation which would be lacking in the descriptions of a stranger.

A testimony from Yorkshire.

The Establishment does undoubtedly fail to accomplish its professed object in almost all rural parishes with which I am acquainted. Not so much perhaps from the fewness of Church services, or the absence of a certain kind of effort on the part of the clergy; but emphatically because the labouring classes do not believe in the formularies of the Church of England—sacramental efficacy, priestly absolution, and baptismal regeneration, they look upon as mere forms, without reality; and the stereotyped and artificial style of Church worship is distasteful to them.

So far as my observation goes, a very small percentage of the laborious classes attend Church services. Such as are attached to the incumbent, or the resident squire, may be seen as stated attendants at Church; but nearly every labourer and artisan who stands on an independent footing, if attending any place of worship at all, will be found amongst the "Wesleyans" or "Primitives"; and what the state of the people generally would be in the provinces, if the two sects just named were suppressed, I dare not hazard a conjecture.

Of all men, a student from Oxford or Cambridge seems the least fitted to have the charge or to be invested with the control over a rural parish. Between such a one and the majority of the parishioners amongst whom he dwells there is not, and there cannot be, the slightest bond of sympathy. If you reverse the hypothesis, and assume the incumbent to be an experienced, kind-hearted, unassuming, Christian gentleman—there is still the fatal barrier of formalism; of abnegation of the lay element; and, what is more, the firm disbelief in very much which the Prayer-book contains and enforces, and which the officiating clergyman is bound to repeat every Sunday in their hearing.

One strong auxiliary is in the national schools, which are as a rule vested in the incumbent; who in choosing a master will as a *sine qua non* have none but an acknowledged Churchman. The scholars may be, and are, children of Wesleyans, Primitives, &c., but the master must be ignorant of anything pertaining to Dissent, and must not be seen to enter a chapel.

The great bane of the English Church may, I think, be summarised under three heads. 1. State patronage and control in virtue of which clergymen are appointed to rural parishes without in the slightest degree consulting the wishes or the requirements of the Church-going population. 2. The prominence which is given to actions, formularies, ceremonialism, and beliefs which savour so strongly of superstition, even to the humblest minds. 3. The bearing and attitude of the clergy as a body, by which they appear virtually to assert, "The Temple of the Lord are we."

Sketches in North Yorkshire.

A greater illusion does not exist than the notion that the Establishment is beneficial to the agricultural districts. The rector of ——— has been there between thirty and forty years. His income amounts to from 700*l.* to 800*l.* The attendants at the services do not amount, on an average, to thirty adults, excluding his own household. Not a farthing in the way of charity is dispensed by him in the parish from year's end to year's end. The Wesleyans, Primitive Methodists, and Independent have chapels in the village; probably 400 at least attend, and they are well filled. The Primitive Methodist chapel is near the rectory, and his reverence expressed great regret that he was unable to close it, as *the noise of the Sunday evening services was a great nuisance and annoyance to the rectoral family at 7 p.m.* "As for his sermons," said a farmer to me, "they last fifteen minutes, and no one can make end or side of them." You may imagine what influence for good such a man can possess. I quite forget how many [illegible] necks he had broken by fox-hunting. About a mile further, the clergyman and members of his family have been the rectors nearly a century. The income amounts to about 30*l.* per head for every man, woman, and child, in the parish, containing about 400 people. This clergyman performs his routine of duty in a creditable manner; but his influence for good is in great part destroyed by the fact that he is a county magistrate, and has the reputation of being very severe in that capacity, especially with poachers, or anyone charged or suspected of being such.

Every effort is made by the clergy to prevent persons attending the Wesleyan chapels, and if any little charity is given to the labourers or their families, it is an exceptional thing, not worth mentioning except for the fact that I found it was *always* given on condition that the children did not attend the "Methodist" school.

In the churchyard of Bolton Percy I met a rustic cutting the grass; I asked, "Is this a good living?" "Aye," he answered, "I should think it is; they say it is one of the richest in England," and, he continued, "the bishop (archbishop) has it o' giving away, and there's always been either a bishop's son, or nephew, or cousin or some relation for generations till now, when, I reckon this man (meaning the present archbishop) has no relation to give it to, so he gave it to another fat bishop like himself." This is a sample of the influence for good of the Establishment in the rural districts.

Manufacturing Villages.

If the clergy do not lay hold of the people in purely rural parishes, they are not likely to succeed in those which have a mixed agricultural and manufacturing population. In fact, it is in such places that the relative weakness of the Establishment is most seen, because it has to stand comparison with the more vigorous forms of Dissent. Thus, of Newchurch, in North-East Lancashire, we are told that of a population of from eight to ten thousand, about 200 attend the Church, and of these a very small proportion are operatives, "who are found, not in the "national edifice," but in the chapels of the Nonconformists—of which there are seven in the district. The income of the clergyman is about 700*l.*, and, says our informant, "I have been repeatedly told by some of the staunchest adherents of the Establishment that it puzzles them to discover what he does for it."

As in most manufacturing villages, the education of the village, while in advance of that of the rural districts, has been very much neglected. What education has been given has not been imparted by the agency of the Establishment, for up to the middle of the present century the only school was the Unitarian Sunday-school, where many of the older residents, including several now Churchmen, obtained whatever instruction they received in their early days. It is indeed, the unanimous testimony of all parties that but for Nonconformity gross darkness would have covered the people. During the last quarter of a century there has been a well-conducted and prosperous national school; but, after all, the chief educational agency is outside of the circle whence "sweetness and light" are supposed to radiate. It is in the Mechanics' Institute, where there are largely attended schools, conducted on the British system. So far, at any rate, the Church has not fulfilled that part of her mission which consists in spreading intelligence to anything like the same extent as Dissent, or with anything like the same assiduity. It is beyond dispute that, were it not for Dissent, there would be but little provision for the religious wants of the neighbourhood. The district would not be far away from a state of spiritual destitution. Nonconformity is healthy, vigorous, and prospering.

A Derbyshire Churchman's impressions.

A Churchman, residing in Derbyshire, tells us that, as the son of a clergyman, and as one who has seen a great deal of country parishes throughout the country, he has no hesitation in saying that Sir R. Palmer's description is not applicable to more than one-sixth of the parishes. He refers to one parish, where the clergyman, who he describes as a "splendid man," actually pays a Primitive Methodist to lecture on Sunday evenings in an outlying hamlet; but he admits that this is a very exceptional case, and his belief is that it is the country parishes which will benefit most from disestablishment. He adds:—

"A friend and myself have a host of examples—and their name is legion throughout the country—which can be adduced to show how exceedingly Sir Roundell Palmer's amiability has outstripped even *his* judgment in this matter, and conventional feeling, early habits of thought, prejudice of education, do much to warp the judgment of a true Christian man in such cases.

A group of Northamptonshire Villages.

These are seventeen in number. No. 1 has an active clergyman, who teaches "Church] principles rather than evangelical truth, and has a small attendance. The Moravians and Wesleyans try and make up for his deficiencies." No. 2 suffers from the character of a former rector. Population, 900; clerical income, 1,000*l.*; two Dissenting chapels. No. 3 has a fox-hunter and farmer as its parson. Average congregation, *five* persons! Living worth 600*l.* Church dilapidated, and people very ignorant. "Multitudes not able to read, and very debased." No. 4 has had but one service a day for more than fifty years, and none in the week. The village is proverbially known as "Dark——." The lately deceased clergyman's whole life "seemed devoted to keep out all Dissent; and by bribery and intimidation he succeeded in keeping the people in the dark and under his control." A village a mile off is associated with this, and the clerical income is said to be 1,000*l.* No. 5 has a totally unfit minister—a fox hunter, and a manifestly unchristian man. The same description is given of the pastor of village No. 6, with the addition that he "is renowned for his bitterness and intolerance." The people are irreligious and profane. The inhabitants of parish No. 7 are spoken of as ignorant and depraved, and the clergyman as indifferent. "To the Wesleyans is due the little light that is found among the people." No 8 clergyman has a better character than many of his brethren about him, but resorts to bribery to get people to his church. The Wesleyans are outstripping the Episcopalians. A sad account is given of the clergyman of village No. 9, in regard both to competence and character. No. 10 has an old and indifferent minister, and "notoriously depraved" parishioners; yet the living in the parish thus described is worth 800*l.*! Of No. 11 a good character is given as regards both and pastor and people; and No. 12 has "an affable" clergyman and a numerous congregation. Yet even in this comparatively favoured parish there is a poor man whose twelve children have been excluded from the day-school because he is guilty of the sin of being a Baptist! "His family have all grown up, and not one allowed to go to the day school!" No. 13, another "totally indifferent" clergyman; but, fortunately, a Baptist station "has been a great blessing to the village." No. 14 has a good active clergyman, and a moral flock. No. 15 has a clergyman who is incompetent from physical defect, and the people are "very ignorant and very debased." In this group of villages there are eight Wesleyan chapels and two preaching stations, three Baptist, two Independent, and three Moravian places of worship—in all eighteen, besides an Evangelist; and probably the money spent on one of the useless clergymen would more than pay all the cost of these Dissenting efforts.

A group of Suffolk Parishes.

Judged by a group of parishes in Suffolk, of which we have information, the state of the Establishment in that county must be miserably low. One parish is so large that many of the people are spiritually destitute. The attendance at church is small, and very many do not go to any place of worship. "Complaints are frequently heard of spiritual destitution by those who are professed Church people." Yet the living is worth 1,100*l.* a year. Many of the adults can neither read nor write. A Congregational chapel largely meets the deficiencies of the Church. Before it was built, "the parish was utterly neglected, and notwithstanding all that has been effected since, the church-going farmers are, as a rule, ungodly and prayerless, and disposed to stint the poor intellectually and morally." In another parish, where the incumbent is old and spiritually incapable, many of the people feel their utterly destitute spiritual condition, and openly speak of the miserably inefficient preaching of the Church. The church is in such a state that the rain pours in—"so inert and poverty-stricken are the Churchmen of the place." In a third parish, "the spiritual condition of the people is deplorable. Religion has degenerated to the merest formalism. All the intelligent parishioners confess the complete inertness which characterises the services. It is a dark place, and no one has had permanent pity on it. There need be no more conclusive evidence of the utter failure of endowed religion." The old incumbent is kind-hearted, but without the spiritual power his office needs. The rector of another parish is a good Christian man, but he is old, and but little is done. Another is a hardworking High-Churchman, but the adjacent clergymen "are as indifferent as he is earnest." Even in his parish the people are ignorant and priest-controlled. Many of them go to the Roman Catholics." Another High-Church rector has 1*l.* per head for shepherding his flock, but the remuneration "by no means secures the spiritual advancement of the people." Generally speaking, they are degraded, ignorant, and careless, and the low tone of domestic life in this and other villages is spoken of.* Another parish has an indefatigable (High-Church) rector, who tries to earn the 30*s.* per head which he receives; but a large number of the people are Dissenters. In the eighth parish of the group, "the failure of the Church is most evident and grievous." It is supposed that half the people go to no place of worship, and the parish is indifferent to religion. The clergyman is paid at the rate of 30*s.* per head, but is described as apathetic. Here there is said to be no opposition

* This is attributed in part to their low wages, but it is added that the clergy have not the courage to speak for them, "but rather inculcate reverence for their betters." They are also described as being in league with landlords and employers, and not using means to promote the social elevation of the poor.

to Dissenters, but then it is added that "there is no life to oppose anything"!

Another Suffolk group.

This includes twenty-three villages, and of these the writer says :—

If the object of the Establishment is "to improve the religious and intellectual condition of the people," as regards this district it is a failure. It is doubtful whether in a single instance the ministry is of such a kind as to give any hope of such results as would satisfy the demands of really Christian men. Within the whole sphere there is hardly a clergyman that has any claim to be reckoned even moderately evangelical. Almost everywhere the people see more of the functionary than of the Christian. It is a wide-spread impression that the clergy serve the Church as an end, rather than use the Church and its services as an instrument for saving the people. If no other light shined on these villages than that the Church gives, most of them would be dark indeed. It is a significant fact that deep religious anxiety, if it be not at once smothered by sacerdotal influence, uniformly betakes itself for counsel and help to one or other of the Nonconforming bodies.

The County of Surrey.

The formation of a Congregational Union for Surrey, so lately as 1866, led to a careful inquiry into the religious condition of the county. The Rev. J. Ketley, in a paper on the spiritual state of the rural part of the county, after furnishing a number of facts and figures, added :—

The figures which reveal the fact that a large proportion of the people have no accommodation for worship, ought to be supplemented by further investigation, which should tell what number do avail themselves of the accommodation which has already been provided. I fear that a correct estimate on this point would unveil a state of irreligion more painful than any of us would dare to imagine. I think that I shall be safe in affirming that, as a rule, nearly 70 per cent. never enter a place of worship, and of this proportion a large number are as ignorant as the most benighted in the heathen world. Add to this the appalling amount of drunkenness, poverty, Sabbath-breaking, immorality, and every vice, which abound in these districts. These would furnish material for pourtraying a very heartrending picture of spiritual destitution. . . . . We have many pious Evangelical clergy in our county, who preach the Gospel with great ability and clearness. We have many pious lay-churchmen, by whose munificence churches are erected; and we have many pious ladies who act the part of sisters of mercy. They are working, and have done much service. Yet, with all, the blackness of a spiritual midnight lies around.

The Rev. A. E. Lord, in a paper on the same subject, also declares that the result of his investigations is "the very painful conviction that the people are in gross darkness, and that of thousands it may be said, 'No man careth for their souls!'" He also tells of a rustic who, in reply to the inquiry, what kind of a clergyman lived in a certain village, said, "The parson there lives at Brighton all the year round, and employs a curate; but he ain't much, sir. Ah! sir, we are pretty well all in darkness in these parts, and almost all of us are asleep; we want rousing very badly."

Parishes in Herefordshire.

Of this part of the country a writer says—Church influence is prominent through the county, and that the inhabitants of the rural portions of it are proverbially ignorant and irreligious. He, however, speaks well of the clergy in his district :—

There has been, in a rural parish near here, a very hard-working Evangelical clergyman working with the Dissenters; but he has left the neighbourhood, and he only served to make the whole district appear all the darker. The whole class are of the high-and-dry order, doing as little as possible. A few exceptions of liberal kind working clergymen can be found. Two or three parishes in the district suffer from the clergyman being separated from their wives, and being more or less associated with scandal, influencing the parishes to evil more than any clerical preaching can counteract. The moral state of the people is exceedingly low. Bastardy is fearfully prevalent. In some parishes the illegitimate nearly equal the legitimate births. It is not a mere cottage question, for in large cottages lodgers are received till the over-crowding become as excessive as in small cottages. Drunkenness is very excessive. Cider being largely made in the county is very freely given away. The education received is often of a very slight character. Few of the peasant children could read off a chapter of the Bible without a difficulty, even when they leave school for the business of life.

Experience in the Western Counties.

The following is from a minister, who has had acquaintance with the condition of from sixteen to twenty rural parishes :—

Having lived in several rural districts in different Western counties, my experience leads me to conclusions altogether opposite to those expressed by Sir Roundell Palmer. My experience has been gathered chiefly from the agricultural portion of the people; and a more servile, time-serving, man-fearing set of people it would be almost impossible to find in a country so highly civilised as is England. Large numbers are afraid to "move hand or foot" for fear of offending the clergyman! "What will the parson say?" is the question asked very frequently, if solicited by friends to attend the chapel, if only to hear a lecture, or join in any meeting or service connected with the Nonconformists. They are content to let the clergyman think for them; and what he says is, with many, the only Gospel with which they are acquainted. There is a lack of intelligence, manliness, and free thought about them which it is truly lamentable to witness. As regards their morality little can be said in their favour. Illegitimacy with many is very common, and is not considered "anything very bad." Drunkenness, too, prevails greatly—both men and women, in some localities, making a point of visiting the public-house every evening. In my experience I have met with but very little of the "sweetness and light" of which Sir Roundell Palmer speaks: but, on the contrary, an ignorant, hoggish manner, which shows that the influence of a "man educated and intelligent" has had but little or no power in imparting those graces to them. My experience is, deliberately, that the Establishment is altogether a failure, and that the clergymen are little tyrants in interfering with the rights and liberties of the rural population of their parishes.

A Devonshire Parish.

Population of parish about 1,800; number of church-goers on a Sunday in winter sometimes not more than half a dozen. The vicar's intemperate habits are well known throughout the parish, and when "the parson is very bad," we at once understand his complaint. The Church Sabbath-school in the town numbers not more than twelve children. Thanksgiving days and anniversaries are invariably wound up with a dance, "the parson leading off." We have seven Dissenting chapels in the parish, against two churches. The general condition of the poorer class is low and dissipated, and ignorance triumphs and vice abounds. These facts are the result of the past, and Dissent is comparatively a new thing; but it will take many years to change the moral condition of the parish. Dissent, however, is growing, and Church influence is decreasing undoubtedly. The moral condition of the parish has improved since Dissent has exercised its healthy influences.

An exceptional County—Cornwall.

This westernmost county must be placed in a different category from the other western counties; and, indeed, is almost, if not quite, exceptional among all the English counties. For it has the smallest percentage of both criminals and paupers. Here then we have, at the very extremity of the kingdom, found the sweetness and light for which we have been hitherto vainly seeking. But then the county has also the highest percentage of Nonconformists; so that it is Nonconformity, and not Establishment, which must be credited with the fact. "Methodism, in its various forms, is the Mother Church of Cornwall. It contains scores of fine old churches, but the people mostly frequent the Methodist places of some ilk."

An incompetent and indifferent Cornish clergyman, who has thirty people in a church holding 300, and whose living is sequestrated to pay his debts, admitted to one correspondent that if it had not been for Dissenters the people, in the time of his predecessors, would have been as bad as heathens. In another parish there is an active clergyman who is "so fierce a Churchman, that he would rather bury himself in the Church's ruins than make any compromise with Dissenters." But, instead of preaching down Dissent he has preached away the people, who, generally, don't care about the Church, and are, as a rule, Nonconformists. Their moral condition is 'tolerable,' but it is due much more to the efforts of Dissenters than of the Church—tenfold."

The parish of ———, near Penzance, has 356 people and a church holding 400; but the average congregation is not more than twelve, and rarely exceeds thirty. Both there and in ———, attempts have been made to increase the congregations by an increased number of services, but without success. One vicar does duty in both parishes, and is eighty-three years old, and is described as a respectable specimen of the squire-vicar stamp. "I cannot," it is added, "say that he is either incompetent or negligent, but the influence of the Establishment was gone before he became vicar, and he was never the man to recover it." "Nonconformity has done well for the religious wants of these two parishes, and, in fact, the religious life of the people is in the chapel, and not in the church."*

II.—CLERICAL CHARACTERISTICS—PRACTICAL WORKING OF THE ESTABLISHMENT.

If Mr. Trollope is not tired of writing about the clergy, we think we could furnish him, from our correspondence, with some new illustrations, if not new types, of clerical character. In one parish we have a High Churchman, "gentlemanly and non-interfering, who does nothing beyond conducting the services," and thinks that the Dissenters, who provide reading-rooms, classes, and clubs for the parishioners, are "worthy, useful people." In another the reverend gentleman is "too indolent, even if he were not too good-natured," to oppose Dissenters, but whose preaching "is very poor indeed." There is, we are glad to say, one rector, who is "most willing to be assisted in his pastoral duties by Dissenters"; while there is a young curate, a new-comer, who "complains very much that he can scarcely call at a house without finding a chapel-goer, which (he says) discourages him." One is "haughty and very unpopular." Another opposes a reading-room unless he has the sole control, and another is charged with "imperiousness and want of sympathy with efforts for the public good not originating with himself." Here is an "extreme Ritualist," who is indifferent to pastoral visits; while there are others who, as will be seen elsewhere, make pastoral visitation an instrument of torture. One rector is "an easy and open-hearted man, who would complacently let people do very much as they please," but who "has a succession of curates who frown on Dissent." There is "the lordly self-willed man" whom the whole parish despises, and there are several whom their parishioners hear only under protest, from some objections to their matter, their manner or their character.

Judging from both the reports which have reached us, and from our own experience, the preaching power of the Establishment is very low in the country parishes—so low that it would astonish, if not disgust, those who are acquainted only with the able and vigorous preachers to be found in many of the town churches. "High and dry,"—"milk-and-water,"—"feebleness and inadequateness"—"great mental incapacity"—"a lifeless and monotonous delivery, sending people to sleep"—"want of spiritual light, and of power to reach the hearts of the people"—"great negligence and apparent indifference to the spiritual interests of the hearers"—"utter heartlessness"—"colourless teaching"—"a strange jumble of morality and ritualism"—"a want of plain, faithful, evangelical preaching," are some of the descriptive phrases applied to the preaching of the country clergy. "There appears," says a Cheshire letter—

"To be one predominant idea in the minds of the clergy. They are constantly trying to get the people to church, and, if they can do this they seem to think they have made Christians of them at once although little if any change has taken place in their moral and spiritual condition. Most of the clergy have a very imperfect perception of the spirituality of the Christian religion or of its requirements, and seem to think all are Christians if they avoid gross sins and attend to the Church services."

Referring to Huntingdonshire, another writer says, "Speaking as an Evangelical Nonconformist, I don't know of any village clergyman in this district who is capable of teaching the way of salvation through Jesus Christ." "Most of the clergy hereabout, I fear, are ignorant of the vital truths of the Gospel," is the opinion expressed in another quarter. Where there is a minister of such a class it is not surprising that we should be told, "I never knew, or ever heard, of one individual becoming a changed character by attending the church"; nor that "the punctilious observance of saints' days, and of daily prayers is enforced; whether the people attend at other times or not." We, however, hope that it cannot be said of many parishes as is said of one in Norfolk, "I have known men who were drunkards and swearers who constantly took the sacrament at church." The following is, we fear, by no means applicable to a single case. "The minister," bitterly writes a working-man in Bucks,

"Takes no notice of his parishioners whether they go to church or not, and it is their last thought to expect him to come and see them. When he has done with his service in the Church he is ready for any business he has on hand, as soon as ever he leaves the church doors. There are two services on Sunday, but I believe only sermon in the afternoon, and there are no other services except on Good Friday."

The same writer refers to another parish in the neighbourhood, the minister of which—

"Comes and goes on a Sunday, and never thinks of going to look into a cottage or farmhouse, to see how his parishioners are prospering for this world or another. There are such a few people who go to church you can't see the path. In both of these parishes there is no other place of worship, and the people who have got a little light have to walk to other villages."

Of a parish in Huntingdonshire it is said :—

There is no lack of church services, or absence of adequate efforts to improve the religious and intellectual condition of the people; but notwithstanding such efforts, the attendances at the services, and the state of the people generally, does indicate the failure of the Establishment. The efforts made, and the services of the Church appear to be altogether unavailing to reach the hearts of the people, or in any way affect their outward life or conduct—no efforts are spared to draw them within the walls of the Church; to urge them to have their infants baptized, and to bring adults to the communion, without having given any signs of a radical change. Such failure is the more conspicuous, from the fact that a large sum of money is yearly paid to the resident incumbent, whereas the work is principally done by other religious bodies.

Fruits of Church Patronage.

It is impossible to disassociate some of the descriptions of the clergy from the system of patronage under which they are appointed—a system which, on the very face of it, completely subordinates the welfare of parishes to

* We have, unfortunately, less information respecting this interesting county than any other; otherwise we could, no doubt, have supplied scores of cases illustrative of the failure of the Establishment to secure the attachment of, or to promote the spiritual interests of the people. As it has been stated that the labours of the newly-appointed Bishop of Exeter in Cornwall have discouraged Dissent and "revived the work of the Church," we add the following :—"From observation and careful inquiry, I believe that this is a delusion. His lordship has certainly, at a great cost of time and money, rambled about the country in a desultory way. The fact of his being a Cornishman, and the disturbance about his appointment, have brought crowds to hear him, and he has confirmed numbers of persons brought together in ways like those described. I do not think, however, that the Church is stronger than it was two years ago."

the interests of individuals, or of corporations. Thus it is said of an Essex parish that the patronage belongs to Christ's Hospital and is used in the interest of the head master, who is usually appointed, and who, "from his independent position, is betrayed into a life of ease, if not of indifference." Of another incumbent it is said that he holds a chair at Cambridge, and "is largely devoted to scholarly pursuits, and which may account for his want of spiritual activity and earnestness in the parish."

Of a Suffolk parish it is said :—

The living belongs to one of the colleges; a curate is employed to "do the duty." He is non-resident, and is one of that stamp who exercises but a feeble influence in the parish. During the term of my residence here, many curates have officiated in the parish, and, with but one solitary exception, many years since, and that only for about two years, not one of them has appeared to effect any real good among the people, or even to gather together more than a fraction of the inhabitants.

Of a parish in the north of England, the living of which is worth 1,600*l.* a-year, it is said :—

For about forty years, to 1870, little or nothing was done for the religious welfare of the district; the rector holding a canonry at Carlisle, and, with his three months' holiday, being away six months every year, entrusting the religious welfare of the people to a curate, who (according to account on all sides) was more at home with the bagatelle-board than in fulfilling the duties of his office. A spiritual deadness and indifference prevails in the district.

We are all familiar with the advertisements of advowsons and next presentations which seek to tempt purchasers by descriptions of the "good society," "good sporting," "good fishing," "superior rectory house," "good stabling," or "choice shrubberies," with, perhaps, the addition of "only two sermons," or "duty light." These advertisements suppose the existence of a class of clergy of whom we have met with several illustrations in the course of our inquiries. We suspect that it may be said of others beside some of the Dorsetshire clergy that "the richer clergy enter so much into the social intercourse of their neighbourhood, that they cannot have the requisite time for their clerical duties, and most of the clergy are rich enough for this." A "domesticated country gentleman, who seems to be chiefly occupied with the care of his personalty," is the description of one cleric; another—in the same district—is "a sporting character, who hunts and frequents races," but who receives 595*l.* a year for looking after the spiritual interests of 294 people.

Much Pay and little Work.

Were an exhaustive inquiry made, it would probably be found that the most meritorious ministers of the Establishment are the least remunerated. This, at least, is certain, that some of the very worst cases of clerical incompetency and neglect are to be found in connection with enormous incomes. In other cases, where little or nothing can be charged against the clergyman, there is no proportion between the work done, or the results, and the public money which is expended.

A Derbyshire Churchman tells us of a parish where the income is 1,400*l.*; but the attendance is but three or four per cent. of the population, and "the farmers and working classes are conspicuous by their absence." The last incumbent was incapacitated by gout, and the present incumbent is very old, and in other respects incapable. At Bluntisham the living is worth from 1,000*l.* to 1,200*l.*; the church attendance is about 120, and "the principal religious work is done by other bodies."* Of a small Suffolk parish it is said, "The rector during all my time (24 years), and long before, has been living in Essex, on another living. A curate does duty. The congregation is sometimes six, sometimes more, or less. The people are mostly Primitive Methodists." Of a parish in Kent, we are told that the living is worth 1,000*l.* a year, or 1*l.* per head—that the incumbent is non-resident, and preaches but once a year, while he gives a curate 130*l.*

Yet in this same county there are two parishes of which it is said, "One clergyman to these two parishes, a poor living together, churches four miles apart, service once a day in each. The religious wants of the parish supplied by the Wesleyans."

There is a parish in Norfolk the living of which is worth near 2,000*l.* a year. The church holds 400, but from 100 to 150 only attend. The incumbent, who has been there about 25 years, has some defect in his articulation, so that it is a usual remark of the congregation that they "do not understand a word." Nonconformity supplies almost as much accommodation as the Church, and has a larger adult congregation. What progressiveness there is in the place has been the result of Nonconformist effort alone. "I have," writes one correspondent, "never heard one single case of an individual won from evil to good as the result of the established instrumentality costing such an enormous sum. If religion, in the person of its ministry, is ever to come as a soothing, healing agency, to win men from evil to good, I cannot see how it is possible, under existing circumstances, such as I know them to be here."

Exemplary Clergymen—and the reverse.

It would be grievous indeed if it were not possible for us to acknowledge—as we are thankful to do—that, among the evidence which has reached us of the utter failure of the Establishment in so many of the rural parishes, we have received testimonies of the most decided kind to the ability, the preaching power, the exemplary character, and the diligence and the success of some of the country clergy. But we are obliged to add that to such testimonies are the exceptions rather than the rule, and by no means justify the language of unmeasured eulogy which many public men are in the habit of employing in relation to the village clergy. And we are obliged further to add, as we do with reluctance and pain, that, in spite of the improvement which has undoubtedly taken place in the character of the Episcopalian clergy, there are still in the body some of whom both the Church of England and the nation have reason to be ashamed. Thus, we are told of a rector "who is not a member of the United Kingdom Alliance," and whose habits have brought him into unhappy notoriety in the district. Several of the inhabitants have expressed regret that they cannot remove their spiritual adviser, but they suppose they must "put up with him."

Another is described as being—

A disgrace to the place. He goes drinking for days together in public-houses, and, not long ago, read the Burial Service with two black eyes and a patch across his nose.

A rector who has been in possession for sixty-six years, is described as being—

One of the old fox-hunting parsons. Because of irregular life, for very shame, the authorities were obliged to set him aside a few years ago. He receives the emoluments and pays a curate. I went to his auction, and the only religious book in his library, excepting a few old volumes of sermons, was one entitled, "Die and be Damned; or, a Death-blow to the Methodists."

We could tell of some others who are despised and distrusted even by those who regularly attend their churches.

Some Devonshire Clergymen.

The clergy in this district are low in character and influence. Our rector might rank as a genial country squire, spoiled by being made a parson; but even this standard is not reached by many of his clerical brethren. The rector is so deeply in debt, that some of the shopkeepers will not trust him. There is the same low type of religious feeling in the parish; the moral influence of the clergyman being *nil*. He is at frequent war with his leading parishioners, by whom he is much disliked. The incumbent of —— is a great sportsman attending all the races round, professionally, as a reporter to one of the London sporting journals. This fact is well attested, and, indeed, he makes no secret of his incongruous occupation. His name sometimes figures in the local papers as being cited before the County Court for small debts to the tradespeople of this place. His congregation is very small. There is frequently no congregation. Some of the young men, with a view to annoyance, will make up a congregation of *three*, so as to compel the parson to go through a service, at which time his horse and trap are left outside the church, there being no one in the place who has sufficient interest in the minister to offer accommodation for the horse. The whole thing is a perfect farce, and were it not for a Wesleyan Chapel in the parish, the people would be in a worse state than if living in the Australian bush. This part of the county would furnish many similar cases.

Another Devonshire informant writes :—

"Sweetness and light" indeed! Our rector is a [here follow some strong condemnatory epithets which are justified by the facts he describes.] This living has been sequestrated, and no one will trust him for a sixpence; but he is a —— and this rich living is in the gift of the family; so one member of the family is always brought up to the Church.

A visit to the sick.

A letter from the North of England describes an incident which may be placed beside the visit to the far-off sick room, described by Canon Miller in a subsequent column :—

The curate who was left in sole charge of the parish for a time, had some friends down to enjoy an afternoon's fishing. Just as they were hoping to enjoy the sport, a poor old woman who was very ill was inconsiderate enough to send for him to see her. He did not like to be interrupted, but, said he to his companions, "I'll soon satisfy her." He went to see her, but did not stay to read or pray with her, but sought to "satisfy her" in a readier way. "I suppose you are very ill?" he said, "Yes," was the reply, "very ill." "Ah, well! here's half-a-crown. Get you some whisky with it; you'll soon be better, and I'll call and see you again." He went back and boasted of what he had done, not having been long away.

A Family Living.

The following sketch refers to a parish in North Devon :—

The population of this parish is 2,000. The church living, a rectory, value about 1,000*l.* per annum, is a family preserve; it having been held by the father of the present incumbent with other two in this neighbourhood. This being the richest of the three livings, the eldest son was almost from his birth designated for it. He has evinced no predilection for the ministry, but his tastes have always run in the direction of farming, fox-hunting, and cattle-feeding, to which nearly the whole of his time is now devoted. As a natural consequence, the spiritual requirements of the parish are wholly neglected, saving the meagre two services on the Sunday—the sermons seldom exceeding twenty minutes—and popularly believed to be bought, as well as reported to be exceedingly colourless, as respects definite teaching. The more earnest religious attendants complain of this meagre provision for their spiritual wants, and make no scruple in avowing that their clergyman has no heart in the matter; but, with a shrug, they say, "What can we do? you see it is a family living!" No one ever thinks of sending for their rector as a spiritual adviser. Indeed, he distinctly avows that he can make no pastoral calls. Hence, so far as he is concerned, the people sicken and die without his notice. It is a sad, sad picture to look upon. As a rule, the working people do not attend. There would be no exaggeration in affirming that one half of the population never set foot within a place of worship. On asking the policeman, whose business seems to be to clear the streets on the Lord's Day during church hours from idle roughs who congregate therein, he told me I might find the working men in bed, or lounging over their pig-styes, gossiping with a neighbour, or in their gardens on the Sunday morning, but never at church. It is reasonable to expect a vast amount of ignorance, drunkenness, and lewdness as the normal condition of the town.

III.—RITUALISM IN THE RURAL PARISHES.

It is a significant circumstance that, while in but a very few cases have we the report that *Romanism* is spreading, there are a great many cases in which *Ritualism* is evidently on the increase. "Is certainly spreading"—"Is making progress"—"Is on all sides of us"—"Is rampant"—"Is in most of the villages round us"—"Is all this neighbourhood"—"The district is overrun with it"—"Ritualism and indifference have possession of nearly all the churches in this locality"—"The Church is certainly ritualised"—"Not here, but is much in the immediate neighbourhood"—"We have two Puseyite* curates"—are the kind of statements which appear again and again in the latest reports of the Home Missionary Society's agents. There are also such significant intimations as these :—"There has been a gradual tightening of the Ritual in many, perhaps most, of the churches, whether Evangelical, Moderate, or High." "The clergy get higher. Our curate goes about dressed as a monk."

Ritualists, like the members of the other Church sections, differ from each other. Some of them are content with ornate services, and trust to them to attract the people; while another class make war upon Dissent. These last appear to be numerous in Dorsetshire, of some parishes in which county it is said :—

I am opposed most strenuously by High Ritualists all through this district. Every effort is made to weaken my influence and crush my work.

If a child comes to our Sunday-school from the Church school, the clergyman immediately visits the parents, and we see the child no more. All the tenants hold their houses on condition of their having no religious service in them, on pain of instant compulsion.

As it will probably be alleged that much of what is popularly termed Ritualism is nothing more than a much-needed improvement in the public worship of God, we add some extracts which will show that—whether the worship be objectionable or otherwise—the *teaching* of many of the clergy is Romish and unscriptural :—

In how many parishes around us is a dry morality preached in the place of the life-giving Gospel; and in how many others, a profusion of sacraments and rites insisted upon as communicative of Divine grace, so that some of the ministers of a Protestant establishment seem bent on bringing back again the huge night of mediæval darkness.—*Report of Suffolk Congregational Union.*

At the parish church the vicar preaches baptismal regeneration, transubstantiation, necessity of confession, the power of the minister to forgive sins, and the impossibility of being saved out of the pale of the Church, which he calls Catholic. On festivals the banner of the saint to whom the church is dedicated, and a large cross are carried in procession. At the consecration of the elements at the Lord's Supper, the great bell is tolled three times twice.—*Home Missionary Society's Report*, 1870.

In nearly all these parishes the preaching was either formal or ultra-Tractarian; one clergyman caring not to conceal the fact that he offered his morning devotions to the Virgin Mary. Silver and leaden crosses were given to the villagers to assist them in their devotions, while the "Little Prayer-book," in which are prayers to the Virgin Mary, was more commonly to be found than the Bible.—*Ibid*, 1871.

We rejoice to know that there are many Episcopalian pulpits from which Evangelical truth is faithfully and earnestly advanced; but it would be affectation and unfaithfulness on our part to ignore the fact that, in a large number of villages within our reach, salvation by ceremony rather than through repentance and faith is offered to the people.—*Report of Northamptonshire Congregational County Mission*, 1871.

The reports of the Wesleyan (Conference) Home Mission and Contingent Fund contain comparatively few references to the opposition which its agents encounter at the hands of the Establishment, and to the erroneous teaching of its clergy. But the statements which they *do* contain resemble

* Such statements remind us of the rarely candid country vicar who once said to a Dissenting minister, "You do all the work, while I get all the pay." Mr. Fletcher, of Madeley, refused promotion because the parish offered him was too small and the emolument too large! How many successors has he had?

* Only once have we met this once familiar phrase. Those who once bore it have been gainers by the substitution of the more dignified and less unpopular epithet, "Ritualists."

those made by the agents of the Home Missionary Society. There are, says the report for 1870, "still hundreds of villages untouched by our organisation; and in many of these the worst errors which are found in the teachings and conduct of some of the clergy of the Church of England are offensively and dangerously rife." "Ritualism is leading the people to Popery," is stated in the report for 1871. The same report has the following:—

One taking upon himself the "cure of souls" being asked "in what state he thought the soul of a parishioner," who was dangerously ill, "was found," replied, "I do not trouble myself about that; it is no business of mine."

Another speaks of the dangers of our village populations, among too many of whom perverted Church influence, quickened into unwonted activity and undisguised intolerance, arrays itself against all Nonconformist sympathies and action, and, what is of more serious import, against the simple, saving truths of our holy religion, degrading the manliness of England, and preparing for subjection to ignorance, superstition, and spiritual slavery.

"High Church opposition," and "narrow clerical opposition, manifesting itself in those petty ways which dare not show themselves in large towns."

Tenants are forbidden to open their houses or cottages for Methodist services, and inducements have been held out to those who are not immediately under such influence, and who have our services in their houses, to turn us out.

We have looked with some interest for facts which would throw light upon the present position of the Evangelical party in the rural parishes, but in that respect have been disappointed. Respecting "High Churchmen" and "Ritualists," we have abundant information; but the Evangelicals appear to be, to use a popular phrase, "nowhere." In one district we are told that, "even where Evangelical Churchmen are gaining ground, they show a strong leaning towards Ritualism; nor do they in any way doff their clerical assumptions."

We have not sufficient means of judging whether these Romanising clergy and their adherents are laying hold of the people, and so making a real, as well as an apparent, progress. In some parishes they are, it is well known, driving the people out of the churches into the chapels; so that Dissent is helped instead of being hindered by their activity. We suspect the truth to be that they are gaining adherents among the poor whom they buy, and among the young men and women of the middle and upper classes. But, whether they succeed or fail, they are using national resources, and exercising State authority and influence, in furtherance of views to which, as we believe, the great majority of the nation are strenuously opposed.

IV.—NONCONFORMITY IN THE RURAL PARISHES.

Were we to accept as truths the vaticinations of those who deprecate disestablishment chiefly from solicitude for the religious interests of the rural population, we should believe that the Church of England had sole possession of the villages, and that Dissent confined its labours to the towns. There are people who do believe this—from sheer ignorance of, or from blindness to, the real facts of the case. Whether by careful inquiry it would be possible to collect such statistical and other information respecting rural Nonconformity as would dispel this delusion we are unable to say; but the inquiry we have been pursuing in regard to the shortcomings of the Establishment has made it evident that, bad as is the religious condition of many of our country parishes, it would be far worse but for the existence and activity of Dissenters. One who has lived several years in Essex says—and his testimony is confirmed by others—says:—

Where there is any real godliness to be found among them, it has nearly always sprung from, or in connection with, the chapel, and not the Church. I speak that I do *know*. In many of the parishes the emoluments of the clergyman are very large indeed; but this makes no difference in the general state of the district. Again and again, Nonconformity is the only means whereby the people have a chance of being spoken to in such a way as may lead them to a better life than that which they are content to live. But when the state of semi-pauperism in which the mass of our villagers live is remembered, and that the clergy have in their hands nearly the whole of the charities, how can it be expected that the poor man will risk the displeasure of the clergyman and unite himself with the village chapel? Of course the clergy oppose the chapel. Their charities, their schools, their social influence, are all used for the purpose, and the marvel is, not that we have so few and such weak rural Nonconformist congregations, but that we have any at all.

The following specific references bear out this general statement:—

Most clergymen dislike Dissent entering their parish, and do all they can to keep it out; but where Dissenters are not the parishes are very dark indeed.

To the Nonconforming bodies, particularly the Wesleyans and Primitive Methodists, we are largely indebted for the moral position of our locality.

The Baptist Church does quite as much for the population as is done by the Establishment.

The living here is worth 1,100*l.* besides a residence; the population 1,000, and the attendance at church but 150. The Congregational chapel largely meets the deficiency of the Church in all respects. The pastor does very much Evangelical work and domiciliary visitation. Before its erection the parish was utterly neglected, and Dissenting influence has been a great stimulus to Church exertion.

The Dissenting congregations are double those in the churches, and there are three times as many Dissenting as Church Sunday-schools.

The efforts of Nonconformists, local and otherwise, supply to a large extent the deficiency in the parochial system. In many of the villages the independent and religious poor have united in establishing cottage meetings. These have grown in numbers and interest, till additional room being needed, two cottages have been thrown together, and the future congregation has been born in three at least of the villages nearly adjoining this parish—in which indifference, at least to the spiritual welfare of the people has marked, and still marks, the clerical course.

Methodism in the Villages.

The Methodists, and especially the Primitive Methodists, deserve honourable mention in connection with the religious efforts of Nonconformists among the village population of England. The statement made of a Norfolk parish—"but for the four Methodist chapels the people of this and other places must have been heathens"—is applicable to many others.

Of Barrowford, Lancashire, it is said—

Methodists do more for the evangelisation of the district than the Church. More people are found in Dissenting chapels than in the church. That holds 800; while there is a Wesleyan chapel holding 600; two Primitive Methodist, 1,000; and an Independent, 700. The various Nonconformist bodies unitedly, do fully twice as much for the spiritual interests of the place as the Church.

Other places in the neighbourhood are also described as having no Episcopalian place of worship; but each having its Primitive, or other Methodist chapel. Of the district generally, it is said:—

I believe Roundell Palmer's sentimentalism has little foundation or truth so far as this district is concerned. Though it is in the chapelry of Whalley, that wealthy Mother Church did little for the surrounding villages. John Wesley and George Whitefield are the true evangelists of these villages, and in Barrowford one of them was nearly killed, together with Grimshaw, of Haworth, by a mob headed by a clergyman; since that day the Methodists have been strong here. Its chief people, as well as the poorer people, are more with the Wesleyans and Primitives than with the Church.

Of the large colliery villages and the manufacturing population on the banks of the Tyne and Wear, the Methodists, of various sections, have, we are told, "done the chief part of the religious work," though the Established Church is very active in the erection of places of worship and schools. We are told that, when new mines are about to be opened, the proprietors in some cases give money for, and otherwise encourage, the erection of Primitive Methodist chapels, and the employment of evangelists, in order that they may secure a good and well-behaved set of workmen.

A statement made by the Rev. J. Atkinson, on laying the foundation-stone of a Primitive Methodist Chapel at Seaham Harbour, supplies suggestive information respecting one of the mining parishes of the North, and shows how little is done with the public endowments, and how much by funds voluntarily provided by Methodists:—

In the parish of Stanhope, in the county of Durham (which parish is about conterminous with the Primitive Methodist Westgate Circuit) there are seven churches belonging to the Establishment, wherein six beneficed clergymen and two curates officiate. The congregations of these seven churches, if massed together, would not reach the figure of 500, and their united communicants would not number over 100. Among these beneficed clergymen nearly 4,000*l.* are annually distributed. At Westgate, where a church and parsonage have been built at the cost of 4,000*l.*, the clergyman receives 300*l.* per year, yet his regular congregation will not exceed thirty persons, and his regular communicants will not exceed six; and Westgate is but a sample of other churches in the same parish. What is Methodism doing in this same geographical area? The Wesleyans have two and the Primitives have *three* ministers labouring within the limits of the parish. The latter have 1,100 persons in church-fellowship, and 1,000 more hearers; the Wesleyans have seven or eight hundred members in society, and about an equal number of hearers, &c. One of these beneficed clergymen of the Establishment receives an annual stipend exceeding by above 1,200*l.* the united salaries of these five Methodist preachers who do all the work.

Yet these Primitive Methodists, instead of being highly esteemed for their work's sake, are in too many cases regarded by the clergy, and the more intolerant members of the Establishment, as ecclesiastical vermin, to be not merely despised, but hunted down and extirpated. "We as a people," writes the Rev. T. Penrose, an energetic Primitive Methodist, "have to suffer severely at times, in different parts of the county, through the present state of things. We have to fight literally all the year round for Nonconformity and its principles, in many places nearly alone, and I know something of the force and influence arrayed against us."

Home missionary work in the Villages.

In collecting the facts now submitted to our readers, we have been much impressed with the extent, the varied character, and the self-denying laboriousness of the home mission work carried on by the various Nonconformist bodies. Home missionary effort is so contrary to the genius of a Church which divides the whole country into parishes, and gives a monopoly to the minister located in each parish, that Episcopalians have no idea of the amount of evangelistic zeal which animates the religious bodies in whose eyes the parochial principle is an utterly unchristian thing.

A correspondent at Wellington, Somerset, writes:—

The Free Churches of this immediate neighbourhood have made very liberal provision to meet the religious needs of the rural population in outlaying parishes. There is not a village or hamlet within seven miles of this town without a Nonconformist place of worship, and the Gospel is regularly and faithfully preached to all these places. The same remark holds true of Taunton and districts around. And speaking generally, the Free Churches are teaching the greater part of the rural population by means of Evangelists, or through the agency of laymen who preach the Gospel. The Baptist Western Association employs five Evangelists, who labour in rural districts, and one of our men is sought every year to devote six weeks to preach and work among the Dorset Militia whilst the regiment is out for drill. The Independent Association has ten men at work. These fifteen men of the two associations, together with the rural ministers in town and villages and the lay helpers, accomplish a most spiritual work which the Established Church could not touch. It may be safely asserted that the different Nonconformist bodies even in this Churchified and Torified district are reaching a far larger part of the population than is the Established Church. This relates simply to the *extent*, to say nothing of the character of the work.

Happily, there is nothing remarkable in this, for we could quote scores of similar statements from the reports of various other bodies throughout the kingdom. Yet these labours—so unselfish, often so heroic, and in many cases so greatly blessed—are ignored by the upholders of the Establishment, who ask, with a confidence which indicates that but one answer is possible, "What would become of the rural districts if there were no Church Establishment?"

Nonconformity and the Agricultural Labourers.

The most striking and emphatic testimony to the influence exerted by Nonconformity on the minds and hearts of the poorest section of the village population has reached us last, and has come from a quarter which cannot be considered as tainted by reason of prejudice against the Church of England, or its ministers. The witness is Lord SYDNEY GODOLPHIN OSBORNE, rector of Durweston with Bryanston, Dorset, who states that he has been for many years of his life a close observer of the condition of the agricultural labourers. Under the well-known signature "S. G. O" his lordship has addressed to the *Times* (April 8, 1872) a letter on "The farm labourers' strike," every sentence of which should be pondered by Englishmen of every class. We need select from it only the following most suggestive passage:—

To me, and I feel assured to all who have of late years closely watched the social features of the labourer's life, it has been clear that any movement like the present, come when it would would in all probability find its leaders where I see it has already found one able leader. There is but one scene of purely class intercourse the labourers enjoy, but one accustomed place of meeting where *as a class* they meet separate from all others, and that is in the smaller village "chapels" and "meeting" houses. I believe the greatest portion of the success of the "temperance" cause among the labourers has been obtained through the action of these congregations, and those who minister at them. The one hope I have of the present agitation being kept within legal bounds, of its seeking to carry out its ends in a calm, peaceful, however bold and determined spirit, proceeds from my belief that there will be a powerful *religious* tone given to it by its real leaders being of the labouring class. If that class really seek to act for themselves, and shun the guidance of outside political agitators, my conviction is this will be the case. I fully expect we shall see a powerful and far-spreading Puritanical spirit of resistance pervade this working class if they are now met by attempts to control them, the eventual result of which none can foretell. The aspect of our day is one, to me, which strongly invites it. The ministers in these chapels and in the cottages where religious "meetings" are held are chiefly Wesleyan-Methodists, very many of whom are themselves day-labourers, sweating in common with the members of their flocks. They are earnest men of deep religious conviction; they possess a large amount of Bible-gleaned knowledge; their conversation and that of most of their "members" is strongly coloured with Scriptural phraseology. They are for the most part gifted with a rough, very ready eloquence, which, stirred up by the promptings of an imagination ever more or less under religious excitement, gives to them great power to excite their hearers. Their great theme is "the glory which awaits the converted in the world to come"; of this they never weary in its telling or weary those who hearken. When we bear in mind that they are addressing a class the nature of whose lives and homes we well know in this world, it is not surprising that the rough, graphic pictures thrown upon the walls of the "meeting," of what Scripture reveals of the future, however imaginative in some details to minds of higher culture, should be them most attractive. It is my belief that at "meeting," at chapel, rarely, if ever, do these Methodist preachers go aside from religious teaching—pure to them, however simple. They have not hitherto, in prayer or preaching, dealt with political or social matters. But we must bear in mind you cannot weave a whole distinct class of men and women into one texture, every thread of which is cottage-grown, for *religious* purposes, and not thus bind them in a common interest in all else. Wherever else the "members" meet their ministers, these latter get at once acquainted with the story of their lives. No act of petty tyranny exercised on a "member" in one village fails thus to be reported more or less through the circuit. The dealings in any parish of squire, farmer, parson, agent, &c., with the labourer, for good or evil, become subject of comment in every parish for miles away. The suffering of one branch of "the denomination," or any member of it, come it whence it may, has the sympathy of the "minister" to whom it is told; he carries the tale to tell, and get sympathy from, all the members of

many separate flocks. That these preachers are paid, it is true, but they are not the men to have been silent unpaid. They have, many of them, a zeal nothing can intimidate, and of which no money could purchase silence.

These are the men to whom I look, if this contest is to be fought out, if the labourers will go into "union," and the employers and landowners are determined to resist it, as the chief instruments to procure moderation in the claims of the labourers, submission to the law in their prosecution. They know—none better—the history of every parish; none are better qualified to declare what is truth in the matter of wages really paid, what the nature of the food and home the labourer can obtain. They have an influence capable of exercise in this matter it were folly to deny. They have the ear of the labourer in his highest interests; to them he will now listen in this struggle to amend his earthly state.

Could a more decisive refutation of the "sweetness and light" theory propounded by Sir Roundell Palmer possibly be conceived? It is to these despised Methodist preachers, and not to the Established clergy, that the writer—himself a clergyman—looks "as the chief instruments to procure moderation in the claims of the labourer, submission to the law in their prosecution"; so that even the rural policeman argument, lately advanced in support of the Establishment, is as fictitious as it is fantastic.

V.—HOSTILITY TO NONCONFORMISTS.

"The plain truth is," says Mr. RYLE, "that the voluntary system, on which in great measure the Church would be thrown, after disestablishment, is a total and entire failure. . . . . With all their many privileges and advantages, they can neither pay their ministers sufficient in rural districts nor provide sufficient chapels for poor neighbourhoods." *(Disestablishment—what good will it do?)* What are the "privileges and advantages" of rural Nonconformists we are left to guess; but we know too well what are their special difficulties and discouragements. About these he is discreetly silent, for to recognise them would be to inflict damage on the cause to uphold which he so vigorously writes. He knows, but is not generous enough to acknowledge, that Nonconformity has never had fair play in the English villages—just as at one time it had not fair play anywhere. Nonconformists fail in many of their religious efforts from causes common to all those who are striving to instruct, stimulate, and elevate their fellow-men—from indifference, from ignorance, from drunkenness, from sensuality, and from other outward manifestations of a depravity belonging to the race. But, in addition, they have to struggle with another foe—strong numerically, socially, and politically, strong in wealth, and not less strong in a spirit of antagonism—and that is the *Church as by law established.* That is a circumstance which should not be forgotten either by professed voluntaries or by politicians, who shrink from disestablishment chiefly because of their fear that, whatever might happen in the towns, the villages would suffer grievous loss by the withdrawal of State-support and authority from the ministers of religion; and to such individuals we especially commend a study of the facts which we now proceed to communicate.

Clerical Hostility.

That Episcopal ministers should disregard the courtesies of life in their treatment of other ministers who happen to dissent from the Church of England; or that, even where they are "polite and friendly," they nevertheless "keep steadily aloof" from every religious agency savouring of Dissent,* is a matter of comparatively small concern in regard to the matter of which we are now treating. Nor need much, if anything, be said of country parishes in which Dissent is only "cautiously discouraged," and much is done in a quiet, covert way to impede the religious efforts of Nonconformists. It is of a spirit and of proceedings much more serious that complaint is now made, and it is the Established clergy who appear to be the most conspicuous offenders.

It is a melancholy statement, but one justified by the facts before us, that, so far as the rural districts are concerned, it is *they* who are foremost in displaying the bigotry and intolerance which not merely harass Nonconformists, but obstruct religion and embitter social life in the country parishes of England. In a large number of cases, the clergy who attempt little or nothing for the spiritual good of their parishioners, and those who attempt much, appear to be alike in this—that they do not trust to the intrinsic excellencies of their Church to draw, or to keep, men in its pale, but resort to means of which Christian men and Englishmen ought to be ashamed. The evidence in support of this serious accusation does not come from one or two counties, but from all over the country, as the following brief extracts from the reports of the Home Missionary Society†, and from statements made by other persons, will show:—

The only opposition to my work comes from the clergy of the Church of England.—(*Surrey.*)

There is much opposition, chiefly from the clergy.—(*Wilts.*)

Clerical opposition retards all my efforts on behalf of Evangelical Christianity.—(*Yorkshire.*)

There would be a Gospel famine for miles round this neighbourhood but for the mission here, as there was before I came; yet for miles round the clergy (with some few exceptions) are the most grievous obstructives of every effort made by Nonconformists for the good of the people.—(*Herefordshire.*)

The opposition comes from the clergy and those whom they influence, and retards my work.—(*Herts.*)

There is much opposition from the clergy and Romanists.—(*Herts.*)

Forty years ago the clergy hereabouts exercised a tyrannous power over the people; but they appear to have somewhat changed their tactics, and now have recourse to a slight-of-hand tricks to accomplish their purpose. One of their devices is, by the influence *over* landowners, to prevent Dissenters being accepted as occupiers.—(*Suffolk.*)

The opposition we meet with is chiefly from the clergy; and, but for it, the Word of the Lord would have free course.—(*Somerset.*)

The clergy use their influence to suppress Nonconformity. Whenever they visit a man in affliction, who has received good from attendance at a Nonconformist place of worship, instead of rejoicing at the fact, they begin to doubt the reality of the change, and try to fill the man's mind with doubts and fears. Other agencies are also discouraged by the clergy when the incumbent is not at the head.—(*Hants.*)

The attitude of the clergy towards Dissent in these parishes, as elsewhere in Cornwall, cannot better be described than in the language of Dr. Johnson concerning the inmates of his house. "There is as much malignity as ever, but less open hostility."—(*Cornwall.*)

The Established clergy, and those associated with them, almost always offer the bitterest opposition to all efforts of Nonconformists to evangelise the rural districts. Cases are continually coming to my knowledge of threats, as well as bribes, being used to deter people from going to places where Dissenters preach the Gospel.—(*Somerset and Dorset.*)

It is their (the clergy's) declared purpose to suppress Nonconformity. When the present vicar came, he declared that there should be no Dissent in ten years' time left in the parish. In one of the hamlets he offered to buy a Methodist chapel where much good was doing, saying that, if they refused to sell, he should build a church close by and take the people there. They did refuse, and a church has been built quite close, and no efforts are spared to get the people to it. Throughout his parish the Established Church is very active, great wealth and mean tricks are alike freely used to secure the poor.—(*Lincolnshire.*)

This is a hotbed of State-Church tyranny and exclusiveness. At a village, nearly the whole of which is the property of the squire, who is nearly related to the rector, the curate has been round among the people and ordered them to burn the evangelist's tracts! A good woman, who is anxious to do what she can for the spiritual welfare of her neighbours, opened her house some time ago for religious services on the evening of the Lord's day, but the clergyman has repeatedly threatened to expel her and her family from the house.—(*Northamptonshire.*)

The Baptist minister is doing a good work, to the vexation of the clergyman, who scarcely ever enters the parish. All the clergy in this neighbourhood are haters of Nonconformity, and frequently use undue influence with the poorer classes.—(*Salop.*)

We maintain a British school, which is especially an object of the rector's dislike, and he and the clergy around us are endeavouring in every way to destroy us.—(*Hunts.*)

The clergyman (a Ritualist) pronounces Dissenters to be "bad people," and Dissenting ministers only "tinkers." Another in the same neighbourhood—himself almost imbecile—declares Dissent to be something "awfully wicked," and his curate speaks of the chapel as "that bad place, into which neither he nor any good person goes." Yet the religious life of both villages is feeble.—(*Hunts.*)

The following are additional statements which we are unable to localise:—

The Bible-women are an offence to the clergy, and have been insulted by them, and ordered to leave the house into which the clergyman has come.

During the twenty-six years I have laboured in these villages, I have never known anything like the present opposition from the clergy and their friends. They have wealth and great influence, which many of the people who are attached to our chapels cannot withstand. Dissenters in large towns and cities can scarcely form an idea of the power which the clergy have in some of our agricultural districts.—*Home Missionary Society's Report*, 1867.

Were it not for the subjection in which the people are held by clergymen possessed of property, our progress would be rapid and wide-spread, and our success would be apparent on every hand. But we labour on in hope and faith that better and brighter times are approaching.—*Ibid.*

None can understand fully but those residing here the strong current of opposition against which we have to contend. It is almost a miracle to me how Nonconformity can exist in such a place. We have every form of antagonism to contend against, which other villages have only, we believe, more intensely developed, while in addition we have a whole college of wily priests of Rome and their pupils. The bigotry of the Established Church is very strong; its clergy and members bring every possible power to bear against us.—*Ibid*, 1868.

The clergy oppose me in every way, and the poor people who attend the chapel suffer in various ways in temporal matters; and during this severe winter endured great privations, as no relief was given them, and in a taunting way were told to come to me for relief, in fact treated worse than the non-attendants at church, or place of worship of any kind.—*Ibid*, 1871.

The curate and a gentleman have been going round to the cottages asking parents whether they are Church people or Dissenters; almost forcing them to declare themselves one or the other; they have also asked where their children were baptized, and when it was replied "at the church," they have said, "As you are on your own confession Church people, and your children have been baptized at the church, you must take away your children from other schools and send them to the Church Sunday-school, or you will be excluded from all benefits arising from the distribution of coals, clothing, &c., &c." In this way they intimidate poor people, and to my knowledge have drawn away sixteen children from our school there, and, much against the wishes both of the parents and children, have forced them into the Church school.—*Devonshire letter.*

The following sketch of a Low-Church rector comes from Yorkshire:—

He is a first-rate bigot, and would crush all Dissenters if he could. When the agitation was going on about church-rates, I saw the proprietor, who lives at the hall, and told him we could raise the incidental expenses of the church by voluntary subscription, and he agreed to it. We went round and got plenty of promises. But, lo and behold! when the rector heard of it, he stormed and called a vestry meeting, and declared whatever the law said, he had a right to a church-rate, and a church-rate he would have. The upshot was, the two farmers I mentioned above received notice that they must either pay or leave. They left last spring. They were Wesleyans.

The same writer adds:—"You may go to hunt three or four days a week, if you will go to sacrament on the Sabbath; but dare to open your house for the people to have living bread, and your days in the parish are numbered."

Of an Evangelical curate in Suffolk we are told:—"He does all he can to damage and hinder our work by underhandedness." Sometimes, however, it is the turn of the Evangelical cleric to be hated by his brethren. "The rector of one parish told me he hated Evangelical clergymen, and was happy that the neighbourhood was free of them."

Landlord Oppression.

It must not be supposed that the Established clergy are the only class who endeavour to stamp out or to cripple Nonconformity by resorting to acts of persecution, or—what is often equally effectual—by menacing or bullying their unfortunate dependents. Unfortunately, as strong a case can be made out against landlords as against clergymen; and their acts, while equally reprehensible, are often of a kind which exposes them to less public censure than those with whom they are, either avowedly or virtually allied. On this point a close observer, residing in Suffolk, writes:—

If there is no formal league between the clergy and the landlords, there is, in some quarters, a rather remarkable concert for the repression of Dissent. While the clergy work their schools and charities in the most exclusive way, some of the largest landowners are declining to accept Dissenting tenants. Where Dissenters are in possession, it is not their policy to evict; they quietly refuse to receive any more. A young Nonconformist, with capital and spirit and intelligence, and all the attributes of a good farmer, after waiting for years and making many fruitless applications, has at length left the neighbourhood in despair of finding an occupation here. Most of the landlords repudiate the idea of intimidation with respect to the action of their tenants in either ecclesiastical or political matters; yet, as matter of fact, the tenantry are greatly intimidated. At the late election, without any direct pressure, some of them chose to be from home, and others, against their avowed convictions, voted for their landlord's candidate. And more recently, not a few professed Nonconformists have paid voluntary rates for the erection or enlargement of denominational schools.

The Home Missionary Society's reports state that:

In Exmouth the lord of the manor has all his tenants and leaseholders bound to permit no Dissenting chapel to be built on his property, and in Worcester, in consequence of similar unjust restrictions, there are parishes where no Dissenting place of worship has ever been, or by the present law can be built, and where many of the people are sitting in the region and shadow of death.—*Report*, 1867.

In Norfolk there is an important sea-side town (a watering-place) where every householder is bound by the terms of his lease to allow no Dissenter to hold a religious meeting in any of his rooms; and where one of our brethren was recently put to heavy legal expenses for giving the use of seats from his premises to accommodate strangers, who had gathered in the open air to hear one of our agents preach the Gospel.

The wife of one of our largest farmers had been brought up a Dissenter, and, I believe, by pious parents. When I first came she told my people, and afterwards myself, how much she should enjoy coming to chapel, *but she dare not.* Her husband's farms are held under the great landed proprietor of the place. In every deed of agreement a clause is inserted that the tenant *must not frequent any Dissenting place of worship.* To do so will be followed by the *loss of the farm.*

One mode of keeping the poor in a state of religious subjection is thus described by a Northamptonshire evangelist:—

The poor people of this village are all under a notice of seven days to leave their cottages if they incur the displeasure of the powers that be. *They cannot have any relatives or friends to stay with them any length of time, without leave from the clergyman.* I have visited this village for more than eight years, and have held services in the open air, when the people have been threatened by the clergyman for attending. The seven days' notice is imposed upon all the poor in the other villages or on the estate. The Wesleyans have a small society in this village, and to them is due the little light that is found among the people.

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* There are, of course, exceptions; for we are told of some Essex clergymen who "rather encourage Dissenters in their home missionary work"; and, in other cases, Dissenting and Established ministers are spoken of as being on friendly terms.

† It is a painfully significant circumstance that the hostility of clergymen and laymen of the Church Establishment to the efforts of Nonconformists to promote the spread of the Gospel in the villages should be a regularly recurring feature of the reports of this and some other societies.

It is of a parish in the same county that the following story is told :—

Twelve months ago the poor men of this parish were summoned to attend a meeting, at which the steward of the estate presented a document to them which they were compelled to sign, the sum and substance of which was that they were not to annoy the clergyman, and to obey their masters, and the penalty which was to follow their refusal to comply with this was expulsion from their homes at seven days' notice. These poor people are not allowed to hold a prayer-meeting or anything of the kind in their cottages.

The following will show howDissent is shut out from some of the Devonshire villages :—

The clergy, in connection with our local magnates, have for years opposed and, as far as they could, suppressed Nonconformity in this district and thwarted our efforts to promote the religious welfare of the people. I have been settled in this village over thirty years ; for many years I was able, though with some difficulty, to get cottages for holding religious services in six adjacent villages and hamlets, from all which I am now excluded and have been ever since the last general election. A clause has been inserted in the building lease of the —— estate for the erection of cottages, strictly prohibiting their use for *beershops and conventicles*, and ever since the last election the screw has been applied, and now I cannot get a preaching-room in any of the places for love or money. The cottagers are afraid to let them for this purpose lest they should lose their lease, and thereby forfeit their holding.

In some cases the clergyman is himself a landowner, and is thus able, in a double capacity, to thwart his Dissenting parishioners. "We have," writes a Cheshire correspondent, "for thirty years had service in a cottage, and have been anxious to build, but the owner of all the land for a considerable distance round, who is also the patron of the living, will not let us have any."

Clerical persecution in a Sussex Parish.

From "Facts Illustrating the Working of the Established Church" in a parish* in Sussex, we take the following facts :—

The club or clothing society of the parish is under the control of the rector. The poor people subscribe, and, as is usually the case, a bonus is added by benevolence to the sums which have accumulated. At the close of the year tickets entitling to the bounty are distributed among the depositors. On this occasion the people are sure to have a visit and a scolding if they have not attended the church. Last year, in consequence of the church being so badly attended, a pressure more severe than usual was brought to bear upon the poor, and many lost the benefit to which they had been accustomed. One ticket was returned without any bonus, because the mother attended a Dissenting chapel, and the children went to the Sunday-school taught by Dissenters. A ticket was refused to a widow with six children, because she, being a Baptist, refused to have her children baptized. The visitor in this case used argument and persuasion for half an hour, and finished by saying that the rector had made up his mind to give tickets to none who refused to have their children baptized. This widow, a worthy, industrious woman, who deserved encouragement, lost the ticket for the clothing club by remaining firm to her convictions. Another person with a large family was deprived of a ticket for the same reason—if reason it can be called.

The dispensary tickets are made use of for the same purpose. A poor woman was in a state which renders special medical aid pressingly needful ; the doctor told her that she must have it or die. The rector refused the recommendation on the ground that the patient had been in the habit of going to the chapel, and her children to the Sunday-school connected with it.

The same publication contains the details of "a still more cruel method of persecution," Some religious services are held in the cottage of a poor and helpless woman afflicted with a spinal disease. She was dependent on parish relief and other assistance, and "an irresistibly attractive leverage was thus offered for using with vigour the screw ecclesiastic." We give in a condensed form a narrative of the remorselessness with which the operation was performed :—

First, the rector's wife called upon the sufferer, and in a harsh and violent manner denounced the minister as an unauthorised teacher, and declared that not only was he a bad man for coming to her, but that she was a bad woman for allowing him to teach in her house. The rector's wife further threatened that if the woman still persisted in having this meeting, she would do her best to deprive her of all charitable aid. The next step was a call from the rector and his wife together. A similar style of language was employed, with still more vehement threats of deprivation of all charitable assistance. This interview, which lasted more than half-an-hour, was a severe trial to a person with shattered nerves, and with powers of speech so defective that she can with difficulty construct a sentence. Another step had been taken in the interval, of which the poor woman was now informed. The rector and his wife had paid a visit to Hastings, where they had called upon a lady who had greatly befriended the afflicted woman. We must realise to ourselves the Sussex clergyman and his wife undertaking a pilgrimage of upwards of twenty miles to stop the charitable supplies forwarded to an indigent and helpless parishioner. Unfortunately, they found a sympathising listener ; and so had the satisfaction of telling the poor woman that her benefactress was shocked at her conduct, could scarcely believe her to be the same person, and was resolved, if the meeting were not discontinued, to withhold all further relief. The language used to this poor persecuted creature was threatening, but the threats were fulfilled. Hitherto the ladies have kept their word, and withheld their aid ; and the rector and his wife have done the same. At Christmas, 1871, the usual supply of meat was withheld, a blanket which had been lent before was refused, the woman's clothing-club bounty-ticket was taken from her, and the bounty-ticket was taken from her mother-in-law, who had held one for upwards of twenty years. One other resource remained. The landlord of Mrs. ——'s cottage is a member of the Established Church ; so the rector and his wife called upon him to induce him to turn the woman out of her house ! The workhouse, they told him, was the proper place for her. To the credit of his humanity, the landlord refused to accede to this request. Her demeanour throughout has been calm, firm, and patient. Twice since the events related the rector has called upon her, and given her an opportunity of returning to his fold. But she has preferred her spiritual interests to the temporal assistance which her conformity would have secured.

We suppress the strong epithets which have suggested themselves as we have transcribed this narrative, adding only the appropriate moral with which the writer closes :—

We are placing men in positions of power and emolument, and are permitting them to abuse their influence in promoting intolerance and oppression. The lesson, the moral, is plain to every understanding. The Church must be disestablished !

Religious Liberty in the Country Parishes.

After the numerous painful statements contained in the present section have been read, what will be thought of the following extract from a letter addressed by a Unitarian minister † in Cheshire to a committee which had invited him to attend at a "Liberation Society" meeting ?—

Of religious liberty I possess almost as much as I need. I stand under the old sycamore-tree near my old chapel, and never tremble that any man should make me afraid. I have freedom to follow out all my duties as a minister—I can christen, marry, bury, administer the sacrament, pray in any form of words I choose, and preach whatever I believe to be true ; I can do all these things without fine, penalty, or imprisonment ; and as far as I can judge, I am not in any sense a slave that I should seek liberation. I am in my thought and in my conscience free, and daily do I bless God for the noble privilege.

This may correctly describe the optimist writer's own position ; but it almost exactly describes the reverse of the position of the unfortunate Nonconformist minister, or layman, who lives and labours in hundreds of agricultural parishes. In such places, religious liberty practically does not exist ; for Nonconformity, while allowed by the laws of the State, is proscribed and persecuted by the functionaries of the Church of the State. It is said truly by the writer of one of the many letters we have quoted that, in most country villages, "any person, if he values worldly respectability more than religious principle, must become a Churchman, and, consequently, all our most promising young men leave us to go to some town where they can do better." Thus the weakness of Nonconformity is perpetuated, and in a large number of places weak Nonconformity is another term for spiritual deadness and unmolested irreligion.

It will, no doubt, be contended by some that a vicar who "does all he can to persuade people not to come to chapel," or "tells people plainly that to go themselves to chapel, or send their children to Sunday-school, is to make their destruction sure" ; or the "Ritualistic curate who follows up the visits of the evangelist to the sick and poor by other visits to tell them that he is a most dangerous person," are only acting in accordance with the convictions of their consciences, and fulfilling their vows to drive away strange doctrine, heresy, and schism. It may be—it often is so ; but it is the none the less unjust to Nonconformists for the State to garrison the country with an army of functionaries who think they would neglect their duty if they did not denounce Nonconformity as a sin. And if the system violates the rights of citizens, we have seen too clearly that it is fatal to the spread of real godliness.

VI.—THE ABUSE OF CHARITIES BY THE ESTABLISHMENT.

Even those who are comparatively silent on the spiritual benefits of the Establishment strongly insist on the temporal benefits which it confers, and more especially on the sick and the poor in the country parishes. In the eyes of many politicians the country clergyman seems to be losing the character of the spiritual instructor in that of the rural policeman and the supplementary relieving officer. "Disestablishment," Mr. RYLE boldly affirms, "would injure the poor temporally—

I challenge any man to deny that in thousands of rural parishes throughout England the clergyman is the means of doing an immense amount of temporal good to the poor. Where is the well-ordered parish in which the clergyman's house is not the mainspring of a large machinery of charity to men's bodies ? Who does not know that it is the clergyman who in every well-ordered parish is expected to take the lead about clothing-clubs, shoe-clubs, boot-clubs, coal-clubs, soup-clubs, blanket-clubs, and a hundred other means of helping the poor ? Who does not know that in every well-ordered parish the clergyman is ready to be the unpaid friend of every one who needs a friend, whether in the way of money, or advice, or sympathy, and the friend of poor Dissenters as well as poor church-goers ? I defy anyone to deny this. The quantity of temporal good which the agricultural poor receive from the clergy at present, is something, I suspect, of which dwellers in towns, and Liberationist orators on platforms, have not the slightest idea.

We do not question that the clergy and their adherents expend large sums of money upon the poor, but, in large numbers of cases, we do question the purity of the motive which animates the giver, as well as question whether, on the whole, the charity dispersed through the medium of the Establishment is not more of a bane than of a blessing. At any rate let Mr. RYLE give heed to this testimony from two parishes in his own county :—

The degrading influence of the parson's gifts are most marked. The people plainly say that they go to church for gifts, and look for the 2s. 6d. for a christening, and a present at a wedding, as they do for weekly wages.—A loaf of bread awaits the poor at the church door on Sunday morning, and charity is dispensed at the rectory. The people are thus kept in submission, and pauperism is nourished. Yet neither the church nor the rector is respected, and both would be abandoned were clerical domination to cease.

Let him also give the weight which is due to this emphatic statement relating to another southern country :—

From no uncharitable feeling do I make the assertion that the system adopted by the Established Church works mischievously in our villages. Appeals are constantly made to the selfishness of the poor ; they are pauperised by gifts and charities ; and if there be the absence of open persecution, there are few villages in which the people fail to see in what direction their temporal advantages lie. Charities and gifts are good things ; they are a boon to the poor. In no county is the spirit of servility and pauperism more largely developed than in Surrey. If we visit the sick, they expect a charity ; if we pay a pastoral call, they look for a charity ; if we speak to them on religion, it is hoped that after the conversation will come the charity ; if we invite them to attend a place of worship, they have an impression that they have not been dealt honestly with if they fail to receive some material benefit. "A dear, nice man !" said a woman, speaking of a rich curate ; "he never came to the house but he gie'd me something ; but as to the new gentleman as come since he left, he only reads the Bible and the prayers." This pauper spirit works sad mischief. Destructive of every noble feeling, it not only degrades the poor, but it generates hypocrisy to an alarming extent.—*Rev. J. Kelley on the "Spiritual Condition of the Rural Districts of Surrey."*

Whether such statements be true or not, it cannot be denied that much of the charity dispensed by Episcopalians is dispensed in such a way as will be most likely to encourage Conformity and to discourage Dissent.

Thus a Northamptonshire Evangelist says that the clothing-clubs are extensively used for the discouragement of Nonconformity :—"An almost universal practice prevails of demanding the club payment on the Sunday afternoon in the church, and of course the people must attend the service to be ready to pay."

Another correspondent writes :—"The gifts are mostly limited to communicants at church, and consequently, too many attend the Lord's Supper merely to qualify themselves for the doles."

"Bribery,"* writes a Home Mission agent in Yorkshire, "constitutes the greatest check to our progress. Poor people are seduced by gifts of blankets, hoods, scarfs, &c., which are distributed by the curate."

From almost all parts of the kingdom we have evidence that the parochial charities intended for the relief of the poor are systematically used less to promote their interests than those of the Establishment. There are hundreds of cases to which the following description applies :—

The vicar administers certain charities very unfairly. Those who keep well to the Church, staying away from the chapel, are well remunerated for doing so ; while among the labouring poor beef, blankets, coal, and clothing clubs are among the chief attractions to church attendance. These are the things which give the Established Church a vantage ground, and enable it to neutralise the efforts of others to do good.

In the face of notorious facts like these, Mr. RYLE's assertion that, in the event of disestablishment the rural clergyman "must rigidly confine his gifts to the members of his own congregation," may be regarded as a piece of unconscious irony.

VII.—MISCELLANEOUS FACTS.

The Establishment and Popular Education.

So many facts bearing on this question have been made public during the discussion connected with the Elementary Education Act that we shall cull but few from the many which this inquiry has brought before us.

A minister in Suffolk gives this fearful description of the mental condition of the village population, and of the spirit in which characterises the educational efforts of the clergy :—

The elementary schools are a great engine in the hands of the clergy. They

* It is stated of this parish that the population is 4,000, that the church holds 400, but that not 150 attend, and that the incumbent has 1,530*l.* a year and 150 acres of land. The Nonconformist chapels are attended by 1,000 persons.

† In giving this quotation we bear in mind that very few members of the body to which the writer belongs sympathise with his sentiments, or would write such a letter. We quote it because it expresses the views of a few Nonconformists, and is being circulated by the supporters of the Establishment, who think that these ought to be the views of *all* Nonconformists.

* Tea and supper treats at the vicarage, and musical entertainments at the school, and other methods of seduction, are relied upon in a Wilts parish.

are universally exclusive. Children who would have the advantage of the day-school are expected to attend the Sunday-school. They are worked as nurseries of Church principles and a Church spirit. With respect to any higher end, almost everywhere they have failed. The moveless ignorance of our labouring classes is appalling. Every where else, among working men, mind appears to be astir, and there are signs of progress; in our agricultural villages it is about as dormant as it was fifty years ago. In this respect our elementary schools have effected but a very slight improvement. In favour of home discipline they have done literally nothing; it is likely they have acted rather as a diversion from, than an incentive to, the discharge of parental obligations. Domestic authority has fearfully relaxed. Youthful depravity is, doubtless, in many places, on the increase. These schools, as an apparatus of intellectual and moral-improvement, must be pronounced a failure.

From another quarter we have the following specific statement:—

We agreed to open a Sunday-school for the afternoon. For the first three Sundays we had an average attendance of fifty-five children, but in the week the rector gave orders that all the children of the day-school must attend on the Sunday. This order was made known in such a way that our school decreased to six children. One of our tract distributors asked a mother why she did not send her boy, her reply was "if he does not go on the Sunday afternoon he will get a licking on the Monday." A shopkeeper called me in and thanked me for books I gave to her children, but said "she must take them away and send them to the Church-school." I said I would leave it to her conscience; her reply was, "You see they get a good schooling, and all for nothing." The children are taken away from our school to have a thorough drilling in the Church catechism, and are punished on the Monday if they fail to get it up.

While it is stated that the clergy are active in working day and Sunday schools, it is also said to be evident that "they are turning the Elementary Education Act to their advantage, and using it as a buttress to the Established system." But while, as everybody knows, many of them are doing their utmost to prevent the Act coming into operation, we hope it can be said of not more than one of them:—

When the matter of a school board was agitated, I am informed the vicar said, in the office of the clerk of the Poor Law Board, that he would see them all to the devil before they should have a school board, and he would take care not to fetch them back again either!

How candidates for Confirmations are provided.

The Home Missionary Society's report for 1868 contains the following:—

Our greatest opposition comes from a clergyman in the next parish, who does not shrink to declare that the forms of the Church will save. The other Sabbath he was preaching on confirmation, and began his sermon by saying, without confirmation they could not go to heaven, and then he goes round to all the poor people, telling them that if they are found going to a Dissenting chapel they shall be turned out of their houses.

A minister of a cathedral city in the South writes that Sir —— insisted that all his servants should be dismissed if they were not willing to be confirmed. In another case the mistress told the servants that if they would not be confirmed they were to leave. "Twice," says a servant, "I have received notice to leave situations because I would not be confirmed, though I was afterwards asked to stay." In another case, says our informant, "a girl about fifteen came to our school. She said, 'I am to be confirmed.' On my telling her that personal trust in Christ was more important than confirmation, her reply was, 'They almost force us to it.'"

Sometimes bribery is resorted to, instead of force. Thus we are told of a parish in Cornwall, where probably coercion would have been useless—

That sixteen young persons were bribed to be confirmed with a pound of cake and a quart of ale for each boy, and a pound of cake and a quart of coffee for each girl! None of these so confirmed have become attendants at or communicants at the church.

The character of some of these confirmation services is illustrated by a statement which reminds one of Wm. Howitt's pungent description of that ceremony in his "History of Priestcraft." It comes from Devonshire:—

When confirmation season comes round there is sometimes a good deal of quarrelling and fighting among those who have been confirmed. In some instances they have been driven from the street with a horsewhip; some of the congregation going home with noses bleeding from the fray. A batch of confirmed ones a short time ago went to a neighbouring village to have what they called a little spree, and one of them got so dead-drunk that she had to be brought back home in a donkey trap, while one woman boasted that she had been confirmed three times!

And now let the reader turn back again from the real to the ideal, and having gazed on the pictures we have been presenting, in column after column, look on this:—

We turn from these, the towns, to our rural districts. Woe worth the day when the Sovereign of England shall pronounce, "*La Reine le veult!*" and make the bill for the disestablishment of England's Church an act of England's Legislature. Those rural parishes of wide acreage; with their scattered population and sequestered hamlets—here and there a nest of cottages, or a solitary farmhouse, now reached by the schoolroom service and the cottage lecture; that far-off sick-room, where some aged one, or some little child, lies sick and dying lingeringly—not for hours, nor days, but for months—to whom the village pastor plies his round with heart and feet, not of an evangelist only, but of a friend; not only with the Bible in his hand, and the Church's message of a Father's and Saviour's love upon his lips, but with love's burden of the medicine, or the wine, or the tempting delicacy, which that sick and sinking one needs; yea, cottagers of England's rural parishes! who shall secure you the ministrations of the Church's mercy to your bodies and to your souls?

This was spoken in St. Paul's Cathedral (May 10, 1871), and the hearers being denizens of the great metropolis, perhaps, in their ignorance, accepted it as a faithful description of the average country parish and country clergyman. The preacher was Canon Miller, and many years of his life having been spent among the urban multitudes of Birmingham and of Greenwich, it is possible that he too drew upon his imagination for his facts. But how is it possible to reconcile such statements as those of Sir Roundell Palmer and Dr. Miller, with the facts we have now set forth, and with the hundreds of other facts of the like kind, which it would be painfully easy to collect?

They are to be reconciled by the supposition that exceptional cases, comparatively speaking, have been treated as though they were fair representations of the whole, and that the speakers shut their eyes to the shortcomings and to the evils of the Establishment in the country parishes, in order that they might fix public attention only on what is admitted to be exemplary and beneficent. No doubt there are places and ministers of this class; and we believe that they would be least affected unfavourably by disestablishment. But there are hundreds of villages to which no such language can be applied without great exaggeration, and hundreds more to which it cannot be applied without flying in the face of notorious facts. Again and again have we been assured of particular parishes that the Established system confers upon them no perceptible good. Nay, more! we are told of some that—"If the Church and school and all its belongings were "abstracted, the deficiency would be a moral advantage to it"—"that "nothing so fosters real irreligion, and prevents true moral and social "progress"—that "it is difficult to see how many of the parishes "would suffer from disestablishment; while to some it must be an "incalculable advantage."

If it be urged that we ought not to expect miracles from the Established clergy, we reply that we expect no miracles; but then neither can we allow them to be credited with miracles which they have not wrought. Yet that is virtually done by those who insist, or suggest, that the Establishment has made the mass of our villagers intelligent, virtuous, and happy. That they are not so, is not, we admit, the fault of the clergy exclusively; it is due to many causes.* Nevertheless, considering their opportunities and their advantages, the clergy have, as a whole, conspicuously failed—that is, not in regard to what is practically unattainable, but in regard to what might have been reasonably looked for at their hands. In some cases the failure is due to absolute incompetency and downright apathy and neglect, and to the ministers of this class may fittingly be addressed the rebuke given to the unfaithful shepherds of Israel:—"Ye eat the fat and ye clothe "you with the wool, but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye "not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, "neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye "brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought "that which was lost."

Others are simply good men in the wrong place—round men in square holes, or square men in round—and placed where they are because the system of patronage and the distribution of Church revenues have sacrificed the interests of the people to those of private individuals. And of the country clergy generally it may be said that they *cannot* do what is effected, or attempted, by ministers of other bodies, because they are weighted by Acts of Parliament and by traditions from which other ministers are free. In that respect the failure is that of the institution of which they are the agents, rather than their own.

But the gravest charge to be advanced against a large section of the Established clergy is, that while unfit, or unwilling, to discharge the duties they have undertaken, they do their best to prevent others supplying their lack of service. If they and their adherents would but give fair play to the ministers and members of other religious communities, there would be hope for many a village now sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death. But they treat all others as intruders on their spiritual domain, and, apparently, would rather that their fellow-men led wretched and degraded lives, and perished everlastingly, than that they should be saved by "schismatics" or "unauthorised teachers."

To disestablish the Church of England would be to adopt *one* of the means for carrying the light of the Gospel into our now gloomy hamlets, and for substituting a vigorous and progressive life for mental stagnation and despairing misery. It would dispel the existing illusion, which draws a veil over that which ought to be known, in order that it may be remedied. It would involve the abandonment of the useless machinery in which trust is now vainly put. It would make the dwellers in towns feel the duty they owe to their fellow-countrymen in obscure and scattered country homes. It would kindle missionary zeal, which is needed as much for our own heathen as for those abroad, but whose heathenism is now concealed or denied. Above all, it would afford full scope for the efforts of Christian men of all denominations, by securing that "liberty of prophesying" which, in many a locality, now exists only in name, and so the Word of the Lord would "have free course, and be glorified." In closing this inquiry into the religious condition of our village population, we echo the thrilling appeal of John Wesley:—"Men and brethren, help! "Was there ever a call like this since you first heard the Gospel "sound? Help to send forth able, willing labourers unto your Lord's "harvest; so shall ye be assistant in saving souls from death, and "hiding a multitude of sins. Help to spread the Gospel of your sal-"vation into the remotest corners of the kingdom, till the knowledge "of our Lord shall cover the land as the waters cover the sea."

But we also call for the removal of the obstacles to evangelistic effort which the nation has itself created and sustained. Not as Nonconformists only, nor as citizens only, but as Christian men, we urge the necessity for putting an end to an institution which hinders the very cause it was designed to serve, and which substitutes for the energies of loving and earnest men the perfunctory work of State-functionaries, and for unrestricted religious enterprise ministrations inspired, and regulated, only by statute-law.

* In justice to the clergy, we quote the following from the report of a Suffolk correspondent, to whom we are indebted for much information respecting that county:—"The reports as to the general morality in different places in this district suggest perplexing thoughts. In one of the best conducted parishes there is a reputedly immoral clergyman, while there is no grosser immorality than is found in the vicinity of the clearest light. The social atmosphere that surrounds a man appears to be his omnipotent law; and that social atmosphere is only slightly affected by the clergy. Many a private gentleman has much greater influence than a clergyman. A single unscrupulous man under certain conditions can more than undo the work of the most laborious minister. The worth of a clergyman is not to be tested solely, or even principally, by the morality of the people among whom he lives. The 'man educated and intelligent,' &c., has far less influence for good than Sir R. Palmer ascribed to him."

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